

LIGHT OF FAITH

ALUMNAE INSIGHTS

Official Newsletter of the Mary MacKillop College Alumnae

Principal's Report



Dear Alumnae,

This year at Mary MacKillop College has been defined by courage - courage to lead, to learn, and to embrace opportunities that stretch us beyond the familiar. For me personally, one of the most significant moments was the privilege of representing our College at the **International Coalition of Girls' Schools Conference** in Philadelphia. Over 1,000 educators from more than 50 countries gathered to champion the power of girls' education.

It was courageous, especially amid global tensions - but one that reminded me of the strength and resilience we model for our students every day. The conference reaffirmed what we know to be true: **girls thrive in environments where they are seen, heard, and empowered**. In all-girls schools, students are more likely to lead, take academic risks, and develop the confidence to shape their futures.



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Principal's Report

I was so proud to share some of our work in helping our youngest community members transition with confidence, grace and with ease to high school.

Our Remarkables Program invites girls from Year 5 and Year 6 and their families to begin their journey into becoming at MacKillop woman. Our Year 7 Innovation/Integration program continues the theme of welcoming our girls and ensuring they know they belong!

I was so proud to represent MMC on a global scale and return with renewed inspiration and global insights.



Three Moments That Continue to Inspire Me

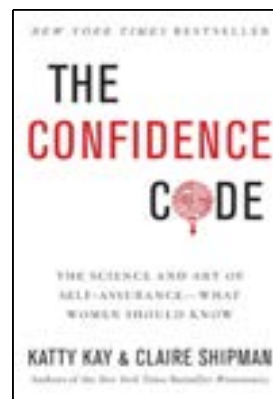
1. Libby Moore's Address

Libby Moore's keynote was a masterclass in courage and authenticity. Her journey as a woman leader navigating the world was filled with wisdom, humour, and vulnerability. Her message - back yourself - resonates deeply for all women, especially those leading girls.



2. Katty Kay's Work on Confidence

I've long admired Katty Kay's work, and her book on women and confidence remains a powerful resource for leaders in girls' education. Her insights remind us that confidence is not innate - it's built through action, risk-taking, and resilience.



3. Broadway's "John Proctor is the Villain"

Experiencing this extraordinary play was a highlight. With teen sensation Sadie Sink, the story reimagines Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* through the lens of modern girls navigating relationships, identity, and the #MeToo movement. It was bold, creative, and deeply moving - a testament to the power of young women redefining what it means to be a girl today.



Principal's Report

Why Girls' Schools Matter

The conference focused on the latest research into all girls schools – which consistently shows that girls thrive in environments tailored to their unique learning styles, interests, and strengths. In all-girls settings, students are more likely to take on leadership roles, engage deeply in STEM, and express themselves confidently - free from gender stereotypes or social pressures.

Girls' schools foster a culture of empowerment, where every student is encouraged to speak up, take risks, and pursue excellence. Academic achievement is higher, self-esteem is stronger, and lifelong friendships are formed in a community that values collaboration and respect. Beyond academics, our girls develop resilience, empathy, and a strong sense of identity. They graduate not only with knowledge, but with the confidence to lead and the courage to make a difference.

I returned after two weeks in the USA with my bucket overflowing with ideas and inspiration. I was excited to share this energy with our staff and students as we continue shaping the next generation of women leaders.

Thank you for being part of this journey - your support ensures that Mary MacKillop College remains a place where girls are empowered to thrive.

With every blessing,

Erin Wedge
College Principal



" May God
grant you
courage and
true wisdom
in all you do
and say "

St Mary of the Cross
MacKillop
1875

McCormack Building

A New Chapter for MMC

The opening of the McCormack Building marks a milestone moment in the history of Mary MacKillop College - a moment shaped by vision, perseverance, and the unwavering belief in what our community can achieve together.

The story of this site stretches back decades. Once home to Maryvale House - remembered fondly by alumnae as the original drama and music rooms and, earlier still, as a residence for Josephite novices - the land has carried many dreams. When the house was relocated to Camp Hill, the next plan was to build a College pool. In 2014, approval was granted to use \$360,000 to construct a four-lane, 50-metre pool, seen at the time as a strategic investment for a growing school.



But in 2015, newly appointed Principal Christine Clarke saw a greater opportunity. Rather than a pool, she imagined a state-of-the-art learning facility that would transform the College for generations. Her vision became the foundation for what we now proudly call the McCormack Building.

Over the years that followed, College Leadership Teams worked tirelessly to secure funding, apply for BGA grants, and build the financial capacity needed to bring this project to life. With support from the State and Federal Governments, and significant contributions from our College community, the dream finally became achievable. For five years, Business Manager Patrick Maguire and Finance Officer Sally Bonser carefully stewarded every dollar, ensuring the project remained possible.

In 2025, we celebrated not only the opening of the McCormack Building, but also the refurbishment of our Maryvale classrooms and the addition of 25 new staff car park spaces - all vital enhancements to our campus.

Designed by Dieke Richards, the McCormack Building is both functional and beautiful. Its arches echo our College insignia, and its red brickwork connects us to the local community. Since opening, it has already become a beloved space - a place where students read, collaborate, study, create, and simply breathe. The library at its heart pulses with curiosity and imagination, offering quiet corners, seminar rooms, and sweeping views across Nundah.

McCormack Building

When the construction barriers finally came down, messages poured in from past students, staff, neighbours, and even passers-by. Many described the building as a lighthouse - a beacon drawing them in. This powerful image has become our theme for 2025: to be a lighthouse for the Nundah community, shining hope and building partnerships in complex times. It is a fitting continuation of the Josephite mission and our College motto: My faith is my light.

Our new learning spaces - from STEM rooms to flexible classrooms - equip our girls with the skills they need to thrive as future leaders. In an all-girls environment, they are encouraged to explore boldly, collaborate generously, and step confidently into their potential.

This project would not have been possible without the dedication of many. We thank Brisbane Catholic Education, our government partners, our architects, Insight Construction, and the countless staff who adapted, supported, and persevered throughout the build.

Total cost: over \$10 million

- State Government: \$3.5 million
- Federal Government: \$275,000
- College community: \$6.7 million, raised by our College supported by loans from the ADF

We also honour the Josephite Sisters, whose legacy continues to guide our purpose and our heart.

As we celebrate 60 years of MacKillop education in Nundah, the McCormack Building stands as a testament to our commitment to girls' education and to the generations of students who will learn, grow, and shine within its walls.

May this building continue to inspire our community - a lighthouse of hope, courage, and integrity for years to come.



McCormack Building

Honouring Sister Irene McCormack

By Brendan Styles - Head of House, McCormack

Sister Irene McCormack's life was one of quiet strength, deep faith, and unwavering commitment to those on the margins. We are proud to honour the extraordinary woman whose name now graces our new building.

Born and raised in the wheatbelt of Western Australia, Irene was, in many ways, a quintessential Australian woman: grounded, practical, passionate about sport - especially AFL and golf - and devoted to her community. She never sought recognition. Instead, she consistently chose service, always asking where she was needed most. Whether teaching in remote Western Australian towns or later volunteering to work in Peru, Irene's instinct was always to stand alongside those who needed support and dignity.



Her years as a teacher and principal left a profound impact on countless young people. Those who knew her speak of a woman whose warmth was matched by her strength of character. Bernadette Lush, a close friend, remembered Irene as “a lady with an almost permanent smile and a great sense of fun - a very strong-willed person.” These qualities - compassion, integrity, and a deep belief in the dignity of others - are the very qualities we hope to nurture in our students today.

Inspired by Saint Mary MacKillop's call to “never see a need without doing something about it,” Irene entered the Sisters of St Joseph. This connection to the Josephite tradition is woven into the fabric of our College, and it is why her story resonates so strongly with our community. She lived the MacKillop spirit not as an ideal, but as a daily practice.

Irene's mission eventually led her far from Australia, to the small Andean town of Huasahuasi in Peru. There, she worked tirelessly to support local families, particularly young people seeking safety, education, and hope amid political unrest. Sister Irene's life ended in an act of profound selflessness. She was martyred while distributing food parcels to those in need - a final, heartbreaking expression of the values she lived every day: courage in the face of fear, integrity in the face of injustice, and compassion that knew no boundaries.

As our students walk through the McCormack Building, they walk in the footsteps of a woman who embodied the very best of the Josephite tradition. Her story reminds us that leadership is not about prominence, but about presence; not about recognition, but about service; not about comfort, but about courage.

May the spirit of Sister Irene McCormack continue to guide our community - inspiring generations of young women to act with integrity, serve with compassion, and shine with the quiet, unwavering courage that defined her remarkable life.

McCormack Building

Blessing & Opening Ceremony

On Friday 28 November 2025, we officially blessed and opened our new McCormack Building. We extend our sincere thanks to all who made this vision a reality, and to the distinguished guests who celebrated the opening with us:

- The Honourable Leanne Linard MP
- Dr Sally Towns
- Fr Dan Redhead
- The Sisters of St Joseph
- Derek Sandy
- Brisbane Catholic Education representatives
- Design, building & construction team
- Past & present MMC staff
- MMC community

To our alumnae, families, and community: thank you for walking this journey with us and for supporting this milestone in our College's story. May the McCormack Building continue to inspire generations of MacKillop girls to shine brightly, like a lighthouse, guiding others with hope, faith, courage, and wisdom.



Staff Spotlight

Mary Fletcher

Celebrating a Legacy: A Woman Who Gave Her Heart to MMC

This year, the Mary MacKillop College community gathered to celebrate a woman whose influence has shaped generations of students, staff, and families - the incomparable Mary Fletcher. It was a moment filled with warmth, laughter, and deep gratitude as we honoured her extraordinary contribution to Catholic education and to the College she has called home for more than three decades.

Mary's career spans close to 40 years in Catholic education, with over 30 of those years spent enriching the lives of young people at Mary MacKillop College. Her journey began at Forbes Redband Catholic College followed by St Joseph's in Toowoomba and All Hallows' School, before she arrived at Corpus Christi - now MMC - more than 33 years ago. From that moment on, Mary became part of the College's heartbeat.



Her legacy is woven into the fabric of our community. She has taught, mentored, encouraged, and inspired thousands of students. She has championed ARIA award winners, led our beloved social justice singing group eccos, and composed music that has echoed through Brisbane's primary and secondary schools - including works celebrating the life and spirit of Saint Mary MacKillop. Her music for Mary MacKillop's beatification remains a treasured gift to Catholic communities across the region.

Mary's colleagues often describe her as the ultimate "blue thinker" - a term we revisited during recent professional learning. Blue thinkers are calm, positive, solution-focused, and grounded. Mary embodies this completely. She brings clarity where there is confusion, optimism where there is challenge, and a steady, thoughtful presence that has guided countless decisions and supported countless people.



Staff Spotlight

On a personal note, Mary has been a quiet but constant source of encouragement for many of us. Her wisdom, her gentle humour, and her unwavering belief in the goodness of people have lifted spirits and strengthened resolve more times than she will ever know. She has been a colleague, a mentor, and a cherished friend.

To honour her extraordinary contribution, the College has named the Mary Fletcher Drama Room in her honour - a space that reflects her creativity, her love of the arts, and her lifelong commitment to nurturing the voices and talents of young people. It is a fitting tribute to a woman who has spent her life helping others find confidence, expression, and joy.

As Mary steps into her next chapter, we do so with immense gratitude. Her grace, her humour, and her deep commitment to the mission of Mary MacKillop College will be profoundly missed, but her influence will continue to shape our community for years to come.

Mary, thank you for your service, your heart, and the legacy you leave behind. You will always be part of the MMC story.



2025 College Captains

Reflection

We reflect on our 2025 theme of Courage. We have learned courage is not just confidence to speak up but also the ability to adapt and change in the face of adversity. Courage can be found in small but powerful actions. As Mary MacKillop said, “Let no obstacles deter you from proceeding with courage,” – it was the driving force in every step we took this year.

Throughout 2025 we saw courage flourish in numerous activities. JJAMM Week stood out as a Josephite tradition that unites the MMC community like no other. From the St Pats vs MMC netball game, Cultural Night, and Culture Comp, every day witnessed every girl demonstrate courage by stepping up and encouraging others. Other highlights included implementing our Courage Cup, which involved friendly grade competition, and senior social initiatives like Darkness to Daylight and Rosies. Each event offered a chance for courage to be embodied; it was a privilege to see this come to life!

We have been blessed to be part of the MMC community for the past six years. The passion, energy, and support given to us is irreplaceable. 2025 has provided opportunities and invaluable experiences we will treasure.

Our time as College Captains would not be possible without the assistance of the Student Leadership Team who were a beacon of support during difficult and busy times.

We want to extend our gratitude to the College Leadership Team: Erin Wedge, Carly Richardson, Laura Chapman, Rebecca King, and Patrick Maguire for your time and guidance this year. Your constant leadership continues to inspire us. Finally, a massive thank you to all students. Our time has been memorable due to every student’s contribution and support. MMC will always be a source of joy for us because of you.

As our time concludes, we hope all continue to demonstrate what it means to show courage.

Isabella Jones & Ruby Payne



Moments at MMC

Father's Day

In September we gathered in appreciation for the devoted men who raise us at our annual Father's Day Breakfast held in our Tappeiner Centre.

It was a joy to welcome fathers, grandfathers, uncles and friends to MMC for this special celebration and thank them for their encouragement, wisdom and steady presence.

Thank you to Minnie's Espresso for providing delicious hot beverages for our celebration, to our PACE Group for the wonderful Father's Day Stall of gifts, and to your local community for the generous raffle prizes.



Moments at MMC

Science Week

Medicine Under the Microscope: Alumna Inspires Future Scientists

During Science Week, students were treated to an inspiring presentation from alumna Eireann Pettman, who returned to share her journey into the world of medical science. Her session, titled “Medicine Under the Microscope,” opened students’ eyes to the fascinating range of careers that exist in science beyond the traditional paths of doctor or nurse.

Drawing from her own experience in pathology and medical research, Eireann explored how science helps us understand how the human body works at a microscopic level. She explained that medical science is not limited to hospitals or patient care. It also includes fields such as pathology, bioinformatics, medical research, ecology, cytogenetics, and medical development, to name just a few.

Through vivid images and real-life examples, Eireann introduced students to the hidden world of laboratory science, from studying cells and tissues in histology and cytology to identifying bacteria, viruses, and parasites in microbiology. She demonstrated how crucial this work is to diagnosing disease, with an incredible 100% of cancer diagnoses beginning in a pathology lab.

Students were captivated by the slides of fluorescent microscopy, special stains, and chromosome mapping, all of which revealed the intricate beauty of human biology. The presentation sparked many thoughtful questions and gave students a new appreciation for the variety of roles that exist within medical and scientific fields.

Eireann’s visit highlighted the endless possibilities that science offers and encouraged students to think creatively about how their interests could lead to meaningful and exciting careers. Her passion and enthusiasm for her work were infectious, and her return to campus was a proud reminder of the impact our alumnae continue to make in the world.



Moments at MMC

Year 12 & Alumnae Breakfast

Our annual Alumnae Networking Breakfast brought together the graduating Year 12 cohort and three remarkable past students whose stories continue to illuminate the strength of a Mary MacKillop College education. The morning was filled with warmth, laughter, and heartfelt reflection as Maddie Dickie (2023), Iszabel Autor (2018), and Eliza Landles (2017) returned to share their journeys beyond the College gates.

Each alumnae spoke with deep affection about her time at MMC, recalling favourite teachers, treasured memories, and the unmistakable sense of belonging that shaped their teenage years. What united their stories was a shared message: at Mary MacKillop College, they were seen - truly seen - as individuals with unique gifts, dreams, and pathways. They were encouraged to walk their own journey with courage and conviction.

Maddie, currently studying at ACU after recently returning from an enriching experience in Rome, reflected on how MMC nurtured her curiosity and confidence. Iszabel, working as an ICU nurse, shared how the College instilled in her a deep sense of compassion, resilience, and service - qualities she draws on every day in her demanding profession. Eliza, now a teacher at Nudgee College, spoke about the educators who inspired her to pursue teaching and the leadership opportunities that helped her find her voice.

All three credited their all-girls education as a defining factor in their success. They spoke of the powerful role models who went before them, the friendships that strengthened them, and the environment that allowed them to step boldly into the world with confidence, strength of character, and belief in their abilities. For our Year 12 students, the breakfast was more than a networking event - it was a reminder of the enduring sisterhood of MMC and the limitless possibilities that await them.

Thank you also to current MMC teacher Nicole Tomkinson for emceeing the event.



Moments at MMC

Celebration of Excellence

We gathered as an MMC community to celebrate the remarkable academic, cultural, sporting, service and justice achievements of our MacKillop Women at our 2025 Celebration of Excellence. We are proud of the courage and commitment of every student to strive for excellence.

It was a pleasure to welcome special guests Catherine Thompson from Brisbane Catholic Education, Professor Donna King from ACU, and the Sisters of St Joseph to join in our celebrations.

Thank you to our local community who help support this event - Clayfield Jewellers, Grinners Trophies & Swift Print.

Congratulations to all on a truly remarkable celebration!



Moments at MMC

Prize of Honour: Giselle Grace

I am Giselle Grace, the Mission Captain of Mary MacKillop College in 2025, and I've been at MMC for six years, since Year 7.

Mission Captain has been about taking the opportunity and responsibility that we have to act, advocate, and to make a difference wherever we can. This year, I was able to do that through working with Cancer Council's Ponytail Project to raise donations and awareness for those experiencing cancer, working with The Forgotten Women charity in the Hearts and Hands Advocacy Event which helped uplift women experiencing homelessness, and support them through student-led donations and hand-made gifts. Leadership entailed mentoring the Junior Joeys for Justice group, and helping organise events with them, and leading the MacKillop Action Group in whole-school activities, including liturgies, the Hearts and Hands Event, Harmony Week, and the Winter Drive.

This year I was involved in the Year 12 Debating Team in the Queensland Debating Union, reaching the finals. I mentored and coached the Year 9 Debating Team at MMC. I competed in the Lions Youth of the Year Public Speaking Competition. I was also involved in the University of Queensland's 3-day Women in Engineering program at their St Lucia Campus.

At the Lions Youth of the Year Public Speaking Competition, I received the Best Public Speaker award. At MMC's Celebration of Excellence, I received the MacKillop Medallion for maintaining an A standard in all subjects across the year, the MMC Learner Award for high standards of application and conduct, the Most Outstanding student in Year 12 Geography, and Mary MacKillop College's Prize of Honour for outstanding conduct, application, performance, service, and leadership.



Throughout my journey, MMC has taught me a few important things; that success and achievement is about what happens when we come together for something bigger than ourselves, it's about the change that we can make together.

As a student of MMC, I feel fortunate to have experienced the opportunities that this college provided me with. Over the years, the teachers and the college have guided and mentored us to be the best people we can be, and have always demonstrated the MacKillop values, enabling us to grow together now and in the future. That has been a life-changing foundation that has helped me in navigating my future.

Throughout this year I have been undergoing the application process with the Australian Defence Force and have been fortunate enough to be offered Direct Entry into Mission Aircrew with the Royal Australian Air Force, however, I have chosen to attend the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra to complete my degree in Aeronautical Engineering, and then I will stream into the Mission Aircrew role.

I feel fortunate and grateful to MMC for showing me that we can accomplish our goals while being a MacKillop Woman upholding values of service, compassion, and integrity.

Moments at MMC

College Dux: Zoe Barnett Pickering & McKenzie Kirkham

Congratulations to Zoe Barnett Pickering and McKenzie Kirkham, the 2025 Mary MacKillop College Dux.

This prestigious academic award recognises the Year 12 student who has achieved the most outstanding results across their chosen subjects. Each year, there is often a clear standout student whose results place them firmly at the top. However, this year the margin between the top two students was an exceptionally narrow 0.05. In recognition of their equally outstanding academic achievements, the College Dux award was jointly presented to both students.

Zoe was the top of her cohort in Biology, Japanese - Distance Education, Mathematical Methods, and Specialist Mathematics - Distance Education; and received a MacKillop Medallion for maintaining an A standard in all Senior subjects.

McKenzie was top of her cohort in Literature, Philosophy & Reason - Distance Education, and Study of Religion.

We are extremely proud of Zoe and McKenzie's commitment to academic excellence and look forward to following their careers.



Alumnae Achievements

Emily Wurramura

It was a pleasure to welcome MMC Alumnae and ARIA award winning Indigenous Australian singer/songwriter Emily Wurramara (2013) back to the College.

Emily was a proud member of the eCCCos social justice singing group and Tidda Girls whilst at MMC and during her visit she fondly reminisced her time at the College with students and staff, toured our new facilities, and featured as a guest on our Legacy of Light podcast.

Emily shared that MMC was a place where she felt seen and supported, a school that recognised her individuality and celebrated her gifts. She recalled the staff who believed in her long before she believed in herself, and how the all-girls environment empowered her to speak up, take risks, and trust her voice - both literally and figuratively.

Emily's visit was more than a homecoming - it was a celebration of the enduring influence of an MMC education and a reminder to our girls that their stories, their voices, and their dreams matter. Her legacy continues to shine brightly, and we are proud to call her one of our own.



Listen now!

CLICK HERE

to follow MMC on Spotify & listen to Emily on our Legacy of Light podcast.

Alumnae Achievements

Neeve Sutton

Past College Captain and alumnae, Neeve Sutton (2023) is currently completing tertiary studies in Ireland. We asked Neeve to reflect on her journey so far:

“This semester, I’m immersing myself in life and study in Ireland through a semester-based exchange at University College Dublin, as part of the University of Queensland’s global studies program. Whilst here I am continuing my Bachelor of Biomedical Science and earning full credit, taking subjects in biochemistry, biomolecular sciences and pharmacology. It’s been fascinating to explore these topics in a different academic setting and gain a broader international perspective of biomedical science.

Outside of the classroom, I’ve loved living in Dublin, immersing myself in Irish culture, exploring the city’s history and making the most of Europe on the weekends too! It’s been an incredible adventure that certainly has broadened both my academic and personal perspectives.”



Alumnae Achievements

Bronte Hobday

Since graduating from UQ Gatton with a Bachelor of Veterinary Technology at the end of last year, Bronte Hobday (2020) has wasted no time making her mark in the veterinary world. With a clear goal in mind and a lifelong passion for working with animals, she's already taking impressive strides in her career.

Bronte is currently completing an internship at the highly regarded Queensland Veterinary Specialists (QVS), where she has been working as a veterinary technician intern for the past six months. The internship, which provides hands-on training across multiple departments, has given Bronte the opportunity to apply her academic knowledge in a fast-paced clinical environment.

"My first rotation was with the internal medicine department, where I was involved in a wide variety of cases," Bronte shares. "I got to assist with chemotherapy treatments, endoscopic procedures, and work closely with the team on complex diagnostic cases."

She's now gaining further experience in the surgical department, where her responsibilities include placing intravenous catheters, drawing blood, monitoring patients under anaesthesia, and taking radiographs. Bronte says she's loving the variety and challenge that each day brings.

"As a new graduate, I'm learning so much every day. It's such a supportive and dynamic environment, and I feel incredibly grateful to be building my skills alongside some of the best in the field," she says.

Her story is a testament to dedication, perseverance, and a deep love for animal care. Since MMC Bronte has remained focused on her goal of working in the veterinary field and now she's living it.



Alumnae Achievements

Maddie Dickie

Past College Captain and alumnae, Maddie Dickie (2023) is currently studying a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy at the Australian Catholic University. Maddie recently completed a short-term overseas study program in Rome at the Australian Catholic University's Campus di Roma. We asked Maddie to reflect on her journey:

“Studying in Rome was an unforgettable opportunity that allowed me to immerse myself in both academic and cultural learning. As part of the Justice and Change in a Global World program, I was fortunate to stay at the Australian Catholic University's Rome campus, a place that quickly became a home away from home. The program was delivered in a way to inspire us to think deeply about justice on a global scale, and it certainly delivered. We visited some of the most influential institutions in the world, beginning with the Vatican. We also visited the United Nations World Food Programme, where we learned about the immense work being done to combat hunger and food insecurity, gaining firsthand insight into the challenges of humanitarian aid.

Another highlight was attending a NADOIC event hosted by the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See, where we discussed issues of reconciliation and listened to powerful speeches from people all around the world. Our visit to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, emphasized the importance of dignity, human rights, and holistic development in addressing global challenges. Although these are only a few of the visits we attended, each of these experiences not only expanded my understanding of international justice but also highlighted the role of collaboration and empathy in creating meaningful change. What made the program even more special was the opportunity to share it with students from ACU campuses across Australia, creating an inspiring learning community and lifetime friendships.

Our journey concluded in a beautiful closing dinner, where I was blessed to receive a certificate for servant leadership, a recognition that reflected both personal growth and gratitude for the experience. To conclude this incredible opportunity, I embarked on solo travel through Europe, which provided a perfect opportunity to reflect on everything I had learned and experienced in Rome.”



Alumnae Achievements

Eliza Landles

Past College Captain and alumnae, Eliza Landles (2017) currently works at St Joseph's Nudgee College as a Secondary Teacher. We asked Eliza to answer a few questions about MMC and her life since graduating.



What are you doing now?

My love for a Catholic community, along with a passion for Geography and Study of Religion and learning itself, inspired me to pursue education at university. I am now a secondary teacher, teaching Year 8 through to Year 12, and I absolutely love it.

Where did you study?

I studied at the University of Queensland and thoroughly enjoyed my five years there. I valued the high calibre of the lecturers and tutors, the wide range of subjects, and the unique experience of being one student among thousands. These experiences strengthened my resilience, critical thinking skills and confidence.

What are your favourite memories of MMC?

I have so many favourite memories! Year 12 Biology with Mrs Refalo, especially Cake Friday, will always stand out. I loved the yearly cultural competitions, and a highlight from Year 12 was going to the JJAMM Conference in Sydney.

How did MMC instill the drive and passion for your chosen career?

My education at Mary MacKillop College truly ignited my passion for teaching. By the end of Year 12, I knew that teaching was my calling. Learning at MMC was deeply embedded in the culture of what it meant to be a MacKillop woman. We are taught to be critical thinkers who can direct their own learning. These are the same skills that I hope to cultivate in my students.

What values or lessons from MMC have supported you in life?

The power of female friendships formed at MMC has supported me throughout my life since graduating. MMC fosters a strong sense of belonging, where emotional vulnerability and intelligence are valued. Developing deep empathy and learning to “walk in another’s footsteps” showed me what genuine relationships look like. The friendships in my life continue to ground me, and I wouldn’t be the woman I am today without my best friends, Lenora and Rachel.

Were there any teachers who inspired your love of learning?

My inspiration to become a teacher stemmed from the outstanding Ms Dickson. She played an integral role in my high school journey, nurturing and challenging my ability to think critically. Her passion for Study of Religion and her well-planned, carefully articulated lessons continue to influence the way I teach today.

Alumnae Achievements

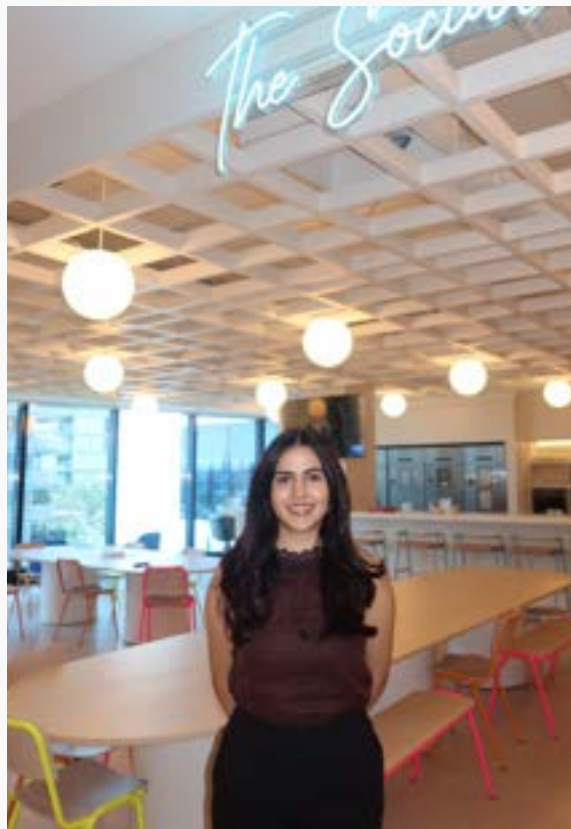
Muskaan Sidhu

After graduating with a Bachelor of Economics and Arts in 2022, Muskaan Sidhu (2018) achieved what many aim for securing a position at a prestigious financial services firm. But while the accomplishment reflected years of hard work and dedication, something didn't feel quite right.

“Although I was proud of my achievements, I realised the role wasn't aligned with my true interests or passions,” they reflect. “It took a lot of courage to admit that to myself, but I eventually made the difficult decision to leave and return to university.”

That leap of faith paid off. Muskaan recently completed a Master of Business, majoring in Marketing, and has since landed an exciting role in digital marketing at the Bank of Queensland. “My career in this organisation has been incredibly enriching and exciting. I feel like I've finally found a role that energises me and aligns with who I am.”

Looking back, Muskaan credits the foundation of her courage and resilience to lessons learned at Mary MacKillop College. “I still remember being told by my teachers that it's never too late to start over, and that if you don't feel fulfilled, it's okay to change direction. That advice gave me the confidence to pivot and follow my passions. In the long run, staying true to yourself is always the best choice.”



Alumnae Achievements

Olive James

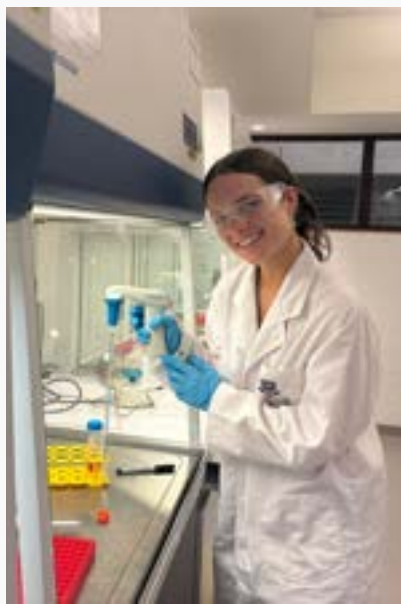
Past Identity Captain and alumnae, Olive James (2023) is now studying a Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) majoring in Biomedical Science. We asked Olive to share her journey since graduation:

“My ambition is to complete my current degree and then complete a Doctor of Medicine with the view of becoming a surgeon one day. The studies I have completed so far really confirm that I am on the right path.

My favourite memory from MMC will always be Culture Comp and the sense of belonging it created within our housegroups (shoutout to F6)! MMC definitely helped spark my ambition by encouraging curiosity and hard work, and teachers including Ms Gibson and Ms Refalo shaped my love of learning.

I recently spent a month backpacking around Europe and visiting old friends in Ireland. It was amazing, and gave me time to reflect and explore before commencing studies again.

At the same time, I've been involved in several research projects, with my latest paper looking at global differences in how conditions such as diabetic ketoacidosis and hyperosmolar hyperglycaemic state show up in people with Type 1 diabetes. I've loved being part of something that actually contributes to real-world healthcare. University life has been full-on but really rewarding. I'm learning so much in my course, especially through hands-on lab work, and living in a sharehouse right next to campus with friends has made everything feel a bit like its own little community.”



Staff Achievements

BCE Excellence Awards

We are delighted to congratulate Adam Munro, winner of The ACU Award for Excellence as an Early Career Teacher (Secondary) in 2025 Brisbane Catholic Education Excellence Awards. Adam's journey as an Early Career Teacher is defined by his outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to MMC.

To celebrate World Teacher's Day, the National Catholic Education Commission recently interviewed Adam to celebrate his achievement:

What inspired you to become a teacher?

I really loved school and a big part of that was due to some of the incredible teachers I was lucky enough to have growing up. They're passion for what they taught was infectious and ignited a love of learning in English and across the Arts (particularly Drama and Film, Television and New Media FTVNM). So, in becoming a teacher, what inspired me was that hope of sharing my own passion with every student that will enter my class, so that they too are sparked with that joy for learning about the power of storytelling and how it can shape our understanding of the world around us.

What's the most rewarding part of teaching in a Catholic school?

It's such a joy-filled community! There is a unique quality as part of a Catholic school where joy is regularly and purposefully found in life's little things, which is then transformed into meaningful celebrations. Having a community where time is dedicated to come together, share gratitude and be joyous is a blessing.

You can read the full article celebrating Adam [HERE](#).

We are grateful for Adam's dedication to MMC and for striving towards educational excellence.



Staff Achievements

Highly Accomplished Teacher

Congratulations to MMC teacher, Courtney Nissen, who has been nationally recognised by the Queensland College of Teachers as a Highly Accomplished Teacher.

This prestigious recognition reflects Courtney's dedication to shaping exceptional learning experiences and inspiring both our MacKillop women and staff. Achieving this status involves a rigorous process of demonstrating impact across professional standards, showcasing leadership in teaching practice, and contributing meaningfully to the broader education community.

Courtney's influence extends beyond the classroom - mentoring peers, supporting pre-service teachers, and fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation.

Courtney is committed to excellence – her passion and professionalism set a benchmark in the profession. We are delighted to celebrate this milestone with you!



‘ Courtney’s
influence extends
beyond the classroom ’

Where Are They Now?

Deb Todhunter

Life Journey Since Graduation

From Education to Volunteering, Family, and Global Exploration

My journey since graduating from school in 1975 has been marked by a rich experience, and immense joys and lifelong friendships from my school days.

After completing my Diploma of Music, I embarked on a teaching career. However, I felt an undeniable call to contribute beyond the familiar confines of home, an idea sown in my MacKillop senior years inspired by school retreats and in particular, Sr Angela whose work in Peru resonated with my desire to work in other cultures. After a year of teaching, I was fortunate to meet my like-minded partner, Pat and together we embarked on volunteer work in New Ireland, PNG, with an organisation called PALMS.

For two years, I worked at a vocational school for girls on New Ireland. These years were profoundly inspiring, and my engagement with the young women taught me the deep joy of relationship and living simply that I hope are now the cornerstones on my life now.

Family and Life in Daly River

Returning to Brisbane, Pat and I married and had four children. Family became my anchor and source of joy, yet my husband and I shared a vision of wanting to work in an Indigenous Community - a vision shaped by our time in PNG.

We decided to move to Daly River in the Northern Territory, a vibrant Aboriginal community where we immersed ourselves in the lives of First Nations people. Living and working there was an intentional choice to engage with and learn from Australia's Indigenous communities. It was during this time that I had my fifth child.

Return to Music Teaching

Returning to Brisbane, I resumed my passion for music education, teaching at Holy Cross School and Our Lady of the Angels in Wavell Heights. Teaching music has continued to be one of the most rewarding aspects of my life, especially conducting children's choirs and the positive impact that singing together has and the joy it brings.

In recent years, we have been blessed with the joy of 13 grandchildren. We have also grown to love travel and long-distance hiking. We have walked across England; traditional paths in Japan and completed Camino pilgrimages in France and Spain. These journeys have been deeply spiritual and reflective, offering a chance to disconnect from our busy lives and reconnect with ourselves.

Looking back over my life, I am deeply grateful to the teachers at Corpus Christi (Mary MacKillop) who helped shape my values and beliefs and provided a cornerstone for the rest of my life.



Enrolment Information

Ready to start an application for Enrolment?

Visit our MMC website for full enrolment details:

www.mmc.qld.edu.au



The advertisement is split into two main sections. On the left, a dark blue vertical banner contains the Mary MacKillop College logo (a white interlocking knot) and the text 'MARY MACKILLOP COLLEGE'. Below this, it reads 'Applications open for:' followed by 'Year 7 2027 & 2028' and 'Year 8 - 12 Limited opportunities'. At the bottom of the banner is a red button with the text 'ENROL NOW'. On the right, a photograph shows a young woman in a red school jacket smiling and holding an open book titled 'RAD WOMEN WORLDWIDE'. In the background, other students are seated at tables in a library or study area. The text 'TRULY Remarkable WOMEN' is visible in the top right corner of the photo.

Reconnect with MMC

Keep your contact details up to date
to ensure you stay connected to Alumnae news & events.

Update your details

Email: mmc@mmc.qld.edu.au

Phone: 07 3266 2100

Join the Mt St Joseph's, Corpus Christi and Mary MacKillop College
Alumnae Facebook Group here:



Alumnae News

Have an achievement, news or event you'd like to share
with the MMC Alumnae Community?

Email full details to mmc@mmc.qld.edu.au