



SUPPORTER Q&A WITH SHERIE AVALOS

Sherie Avalos (pictured above, second from right, at our Race Day) is the newest member of the Mater Dei Board. Along with her enthusiasm, she brings her experience in both the disability and not-for-profit sectors. Read on to learn more...

Q How did you first become involved with Mater Dei?

A In 1995 I was an Employment Officer at Macarthur Disability Services, supporting people with a disability to choose, get and keep employment. A past School Captain from Mater Dei registered with Macarthur Disability Services and I supported him. He has been working in his job for over 19 years and I have had the honour of being part of his journey. Since then I have assisted a number of ex Mater Dei student choose, get and keep employment.

Q What have you learnt since you began your connection with Mater Dei and what keeps you coming back?

A I have learnt that Mater Dei, with its individual programs, prepares each and every student for life after School. I worked with many schools in the Macarthur area, and Mater Dei was top of my list for having the most prepared students.

Q Do you have a favourite story to tell about Mater Dei?

A I have lots of stories. But one that helped me in supporting carers was when a parent came into my office with her son who had just finished at Mater Dei. She was very quick to tell me that her son had been at Mater Dei and they had done a great job preparing him for the next stage in his life; and they had also supported and prepared her for this next step, so I could not put anything over on her and I'd better watch up. She taught me to listen, to understand and respect the work the school,

family and community had done in developing her son; and that without them he would not have been ready to move into the next stage of his life.

Q Who is the most inspiring person you have met?

A Mother Teresa. I have never met her but I believe one does not need to meet her to be inspired by her good works.

"Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you, you can't begin to know who He Wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him."

These words of Blessed Mother Teresa open for us the depths of her faith and witness in the world. What was it in her that touched so many so deeply? How do we account for her universal impact on Christians and non-Christians alike? How did she accomplish so much with no extraordinary talents or qualifications?

Q What is your matra?

A From the words of Mother Teresa:

'I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. Together we can do great things.'

Q Which five people would you invite to dinner?

A Blessed Mother Teresa, Anne Frank, Diana, Princess of Wales, Florence Nightingale, Katharine Hepburn.