

FAREWELL TO THE CLASS OF 2015



Recently, Beth Simpson returned to the school campus following a transition opportunity at the Post School Program Provider with whom she will commence in the New Year. Beth exclaimed, "I get to go out to buy my lunch and I made two new friends!" Beth's enthusiasm was followed by a more solemn realisation, as her shoulders slumped just a little – "But I won't get to see Kaylee and Eliza every day".

Beth had summed it up perfectly – this time of year brings excitement and anticipation with the new adventures just beyond the horizon, yet tones of sadness when reflecting on what they leave behind.

'Matters' asked the students what they have loved about Mater Dei, what they will miss, and what their plans are for next year:

Beth Simpson was this year honored to be the Red House Captain. Beth has worked in many places for her SWP, but it was at Carrington Centennial Aged Care that she really shone. Beth is looking forward to joining the team at AFFORD, Lurnea, for her Community Participation program next year.

Daniel Jones took a real shining to the staff and activities at Teen Ranch each Wednesday for SWP, but it is the Music Therapy sessions with Miss Mallet that Dan will miss the most. Thankfully, Sunnyfields at Orchard Hills, where Dan will begin Community Participation, has a fantastic regular music program too!

Thomas Crichton's favourite thing about Mater Dei has been the Performing Arts Nights! Thankfully he has the treasured DVDs to watch whenever he feels like reminiscing.

Jackson Keane has particularly enjoyed working at Woolworths, Camden and in the Mater Dei Infants Classes for his Structured Work Placement (SWP) positions.

James Slender was extremely proud to be a House Captain in 2015, and attend the Foundation Dinner as a student representative. "I also loved singing in the choir", says James.

Brenton Saunders especially liked working "with all of the blokes" at businesses including Mitre10, Camden Tyres and Poplar Tourist Park throughout his senior years.

Tom, Jackson, James and Brenton all begin their Community Participation programs with Interchange, Camden in 2016.

The highlight for **Joe Dimassi's** final year at Mater Dei was his SWP and performing "Singing in the Rain" at the Performing Arts Night. Joe begins study at TAFE next year in the Hospitality field, and hopes to secure a traineeship locally in the industry.

Emma-Jane Duggan particularly enjoyed the excursions and retreats throughout her senior school years, and of course, her responsibilities as our Blue House Captain. Emma-Jane begins a Transition to Work program with Disability Services Australia, Campbelltown, next year.

Lourens Jacobs has really enjoyed being able to hang out with all of the new friends that he's met at John Therry, as a member of the Satellite Class. Lourens has commenced introductory activities with AFFORD, Campbelltown, in readiness for his Transition to Work program in the new year.

Jessica Pound, our female School Captain, has loved the variety and new skills learned in having so many different SWP roles over the last two years, such as in the offices of the Local Members of Parliament, and at Macarthur Vets, Mount Annan. These skills have been great preparation for her commencement of Transition to Work at Disability Services Australia in 2016.

Aaron Seeney's highlight has been graduating! Aaron says that there have been so many highlights in leading up to his graduation, that it would be too hard to name just one. Aaron will also commence his Transition to Work program at Disability Services Australia, next year.

Our 2015 male School Captain, **Jaber Jareer** begins a Transition to Work program with Job Support, Campbelltown in 2016. Like many of his peers, Jareer says, "I'm just going to miss hanging out with his friends".

In the words of Mr Fitzgerald, Mater Dei will continue to be a great school without these young men and women, but it will never be the same school. We wish them all the very best for a smooth, challenging and successful start to their post-school years.