

Many Facets

As we move to the latter stages of the term I am constantly reminded of the diversity of the educational program at the College and the opportunity the boys have to participate at so many different levels. If Riverview is something of a proverbial jewel, it comprises many facets with an integrated sense of both complementarity and aspiration, fully in accord with its foundation and its tradition.

Over recent weeks the boys in Year 10 have been pursuing a Project Based Learning (PBL) activity entitled *Magis 5K*. More than a standardised research assignment, it utilises problem-based learning that involves transdisciplinary skills of collaboration, systematic investigation, analysis and synthesis to arrive at reasoned and sustained conclusions. The proposition in itself has been challenging: *How can we generate the greatest impact in response to the greatest need?* Students were asked to look around the world at areas of desperate need and then research, assess and provide responses which would hold the best long term and sustainable futures, be they to the paucity of electricity in villages in the Himalayas, nutrition levels of diet in nutrient-poor regions of the world, disease in countries where it is endemic, or institutional oppression of the dispossessed and vulnerable. These are big questions that require macro-analysis and discernment, questions that demand different perspectives to be considered and evaluated. And, they need to be the object of rigorous interrogation in order to respond to the complexities that are inherent to each situation in its contextual setting. All projects were presented to a senior judging panel from Jesuit Mission who assessed the calibre of the work, and, they were mightily impressed with the boys' work. In its own way, *Magis 5K* has become part of the lexicon at Year 10 and this spirit is permeating much of the educational program, be it in Religious Education, English or the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) that are the object of so much endeavour across the school.

One of the many distinctive elements of a school like Riverview is the need for inclusion. This is the driving ethic behind the Special Education Inclusion Program (SEIP), which sees 15 boys with significant disabilities catered for in a program that is tailored to their particular needs. These young men are integral to our community and they provide perspectives on a daily basis that enrich all in the College. Recently the SEIP class joined Tara Anglican School for Girls on their Multi-Sports Day excursion. This provided an opportunity to meet and interact with other students in special education units in Sydney and participate meaningfully in a range of different activities from bocce and gymnastics, to some of the more competitive sports such as athletics and netball. On Tuesday, the girls in the Special Needs class at PLC joined the boys for an inspirational talk from Josie McLean, who won a Gold Medal representing Australia at the Special Olympics in Los Angeles in 2015. Lunch followed and the boys were a credit to the College on each occasion. Many thanks are extended to the staff who undertake such wonderful work with some of our most precious boys.

A Year 11 Student Leadership Program delivered through the Arrupe Academy is into its third week and it has been extremely well received by the boys. Taking the eponymous name of one of the very significant Superior Generals of the Society of Jesus, the boys are encouraged to reflect on the virtues of leadership in a Christian and Ignatian context if they are to proceed to

take up leadership positions in their Graduation year as House Captains, Prefects, Proctors or the Executive Leadership roles in the College. It is entirely appropriate that if the boys are to undertake these roles they be formed in an understanding of how to lead, and while not all of the boys will be elected to these positions, they will be the beneficiaries of training that focuses on service, integrity, commitment and values.

It was a golden moment for one of our seniors – Trey Petterson, on Thursday evening at the Annual Yalari Dinner when he received a Senior Student Leadership Award. In excess of 1,000 students, staff and invited guests attended this gala affair to celebrate the achievements of Indigenous students in schools around the nation. Some of the nation's most impressive figures were in attendance including past Australian of the Year, Adam Goodes, Michael O'Loughlin and Waverley Stanley. Trey, who has been an outstanding member of his year level and a young Indigenous man who has made an enormous contribution to the life of the College since he arrived six years ago, responded to this award with enormous grace and poise in the public domain.

One of the lesser known events in which Riverview boys find themselves is the Coonabarabran Equestrian Expo, which tests the best in horse-handling skills under tough conditions against some of the best riders in NSW. As part of the many disciplines in this two-day event, the Riverview Team showed their craftsmanship in Showjumping, Polocrosse and associated Equestrian events. And, some very fine results were registered with Charles Noonan placed First in Showjumping and three other Second Prize results – all testament to the boys' expertise in the saddle and their commitment to their chosen, highly competitive, and demanding events.

With a four-day break over the coming weekend it is a chance to draw breath after the pace of life over the last six weeks. Upon return there is only eight schooling days remaining for the term so the pressure is on to finish strong, especially for the boys in Year 12 who confront their Trial HSC Examinations over the course of the coming term.

Best wishes for a well-earned rest and for those who are travelling, please travel safely.