



# BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrong Girls High School

Cooper Road, Birrong 2143 Telephone: 9644 5057 Fax: 9644 8157

Issue No. 7

November 2019

## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Parents,

As we find ourselves speeding through Term 4, our school community sets its sights on the year ahead. In addition to the families we have already welcomed in 2019, we are also preparing for our next major intake of students in Year 6. Having met them on a number of occasions already, we hope that they are excited about what lies ahead. Also part of this term's cycle, Year 11 have officially become Year 12 and commenced the final stage of their HSC course. Over the past five weeks, Year 11 have participated in regular preparation workshops to support their study. Applying consistent study routines and taking advantage of the wealth of resources and support on offer at school, including ongoing feedback from teachers will ensure that the class of 2020 achieve great success.

### Uniform update

Throughout the year, we have undergone considerable consultation about our school uniform, responding to a number of issues raised by staff, parents and students. Consequently, we are about to launch our updated uniform range and policy. Uniform will be available for purchase directly from the school premises by December. Every item of the school uniform has been carefully designed and selected for a specific purpose. No alternate pants or athletic gear will be accepted. Students who have special requirements to secure the appropriate fit will be catered for personally by our uniform supplier. Reji Uniforms have an exceptional reputation for design, quality and service and we look forward to a long partnership with them. Parents are advised that there are three changes to the uniform that **must** be adhered to by the commencement of the school year in Term 1, 2020. The three items are:

- the modest length skirt for seniors and all other students who require it
- the PDHPE uniform
- the navy school pant.

All other uniform items can be replaced as needed. Parents are advised to factor these purchases into expenditure when preparing their children for next year. Parents are reminded about our school shoe policy and are advised that the new uniform policy also outlines expectations regarding general grooming, including jewellery, makeup and nails.

## BGHS Policy on Technological Devices

The TDP (Technological Device Policy) will be released to the school community in the coming weeks. This will be accompanied by a briefing with each year group. The TDP has been the result of almost a year of observations, analysis and consultation about student technology needs within the educational landscape of the school grounds. The purpose of the policy is to secure healthy, safe and productive access to technology. Since the commencement of 2019, the school's technology has been strategically upgraded as part of a three-year plan of improving facilities and access to resources for our key stakeholders. Consequently, iPads and laptops are not required for effective learning at the school. The HSC examinations are demanding assessments of learning that are hand written. Extended periods on devices daily reduces the stamina and speed within which students can respond in hand written examinations and serves as a serious disadvantage. Unfortunately, these devices have also been used to access phone messaging and social media sites that are in contradiction with our school's focus on quality learning and teaching. The new policy will outline the school's values and expectations. Students who have specialised requirements will be catered for.

<i>Inside this issue:</i>	<i>Page/s</i>
<i>Principal's Report</i>	1-2
<i>Report from the Deputy Principals</i>	2-3
<i>Head Teacher Administration Report</i>	3-4
<i>Careers News</i>	4
<i>Welfare Report</i>	5-6
<i>Year 11 Hospitality Excursion</i>	6
<i>Year 7 Reptile IncurSION</i>	6-7
<i>CAPA Report</i>	7
<i>U/15's Knockout Netball</i>	8
<i>Next P&amp;C Meeting</i>	8
<i>2019 CSIRO STEM in Schools Visit by Senator Mehreen Faruqi</i>	8
<i>Victor Chang Awards</i>	9
<i>L'Oréal Girls in Science Forum</i>	9-10
<i>Congratulations to 2019 Premier's Reading Challenge participants</i>	10
<i>Birrongs Girls' Drama Club performance</i>	10
<i>School Calendar</i>	10
<i>From the English Desk</i>	11-12

### **Scholarships and other recognition**

Heartfelt gratitude goes to my entire staff for their ongoing commitment to educating our students and seeking out additional opportunities for them. Two of our Year 10 girls, Sidra and Vivian have been successfully selected to receive ABCN scholarships. These are coveted and competitive scholarships that are three years in length (including the first year of tertiary study) and come not only with financial support but a mentor. ABCN scholarship holders have access to a range of opportunities as a result of being selected that often result in cadetships and graduate programs later on. At the very least, they propel students into their post school pathways and instil them with a range of new found skills and confidence. We are also proud of our Victor Chang Science Award recipients Hanin and Angela who represented our school proudly. They were selected because of their top performance in their Science electives and we were all inspired by the insight into the work that the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute is currently conducting.

### **Our core business**

While we have a month and a half before our extended summer break, it is important for all families to understand that commitment to classwork and study are vital for the rest of the term. There is still much to learn in every year group. There is most certainly much more to learn. We look to our parents to promote this mindset in their children and encourage their focus until the year is over.

We look forward to seeing our parents at the number of end of year functions, including our P&C meeting in Week 6 and Presentation Day in Week 9.

Zena Dabaja  
**Principal**

### **REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS**

Welcome back to Term 4, a time to work hard towards future goals.

The online 'Tell Them From Me – Partners in Learning Parent Survey' was available for all parents and carers from Monday 2 September-Friday 27 September. Many thanks to those people who responded. Our response rate was pleasing, carers and community members providing vital feedback that will help us to strengthen the important relationship between parents and our school.

The school's website is updated regularly with videos and photographs showing the range of educational experiences in which our students participate. The calendar now includes the full range of activities on our school schedule. We urge

you to visit the site often to learn more about what happens in our learning environments.

We wish all the 2019 Year 12 students the very best as they embark on their HSC examinations. These examinations bring to a close their secondary schooling and prepare them for continued success in future endeavours.

Our Year 11 students have completed their Preliminary Year examinations and they have already begun their preparation for the HSC in 2020. Students have received their reports and should spend some time reflecting on their performance and are encouraged to seek assistance from their teachers to identify how they could achieve improvement. The Year 12 Handbook has been distributed and students are encouraged to plan their term carefully, taking note of when assessment tasks are due and ensuring that they are well organised to complete all required work. Students are reminded to adhere to school procedures for assessment tasks and examinations which are explained in the handbook. Nightly study habits and a clear focus on completing work to develop deep understanding are essential in achieving the best possible future outcomes. It is also important that students achieve a balance between family, study and extracurricular activities. Students should get the right amount of sleep and rest, as this often impacts on the effectiveness of their study routines. If students are experiencing difficulty in maintaining a balance, or need assistance with setting goals, we encourage them to be proactive and seek help from Ms Rothwell, Mr Farrugia, Ms Salvagio or Ms Tselepi.

Throughout Term 4 Year 10 students are expected to continue working diligently, making sure they complete all class and assessment tasks to a high standard to ensure they achieve all course outcomes. All Year 10 students have now chosen their Preliminary HSC subjects for Year 11. Some students will need to reflect on their selections and consider if their choices are best suited to their capabilities and future career aspirations. It is important that students listen to advice and make decisions which will allow them to achieve to the best of their ability. For some students, the prospect of gaining a traineeship or apprenticeship (working and undergoing training whilst being paid) may be a more appealing and appropriate pathway. Parents of Year 10 students considering an alternate pathway are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss the best options and opportunities for success post Year 10 with Ms Shinas, the school's Transition Teacher or Ms Wailes, Careers Adviser.

Year 9 students received their NAPLAN results in late August. These results allow parents to reflect on some areas of their daughter's progress in literacy and numeracy and allow teachers to plan to further develop literacy and numeracy skills through targeted teaching practices. NAPLAN was the first of a number of opportunities these students have to demonstrate a minimum standard of reading, writing and numeracy to receive the HSC in 2022. Some of our students did achieve the minimum standard of Band 8 but it is expected that most students across the state will demonstrate the HSC minimum standard by passing new, short online reading, writing and numeracy tests in Year 10, 11 or 12.

All Year 8 students have selected their Year 9 elective subjects for 2020. These electives will continue to be studied in Year 10 2021. All students were involved in the Year 8 VALID (Science) online testing at the start of Week 3.

Year 7 students also received their NAPLAN results in late August. To improve, it is vital that parents provide an environment that encourages regular reading which will assist students to improve their comprehension as well as vocabulary. All Year 7 will participate in the PDHPE swim school program at the end of Week 8. The annual swim school program will be led by qualified AUSTSWIM instructors supported by our PDHPE teachers.

Parents are reminded that the Homework Centre is available for students to complete work and seek assistance when they experience difficulty. It operates after school on Monday through Thursday and is supervised by qualified teachers from the school. This term will be a busy time studying for and completing assessment tasks, and preparing for yearly examinations. Now is the time to work especially hard to ensure that reports reflect students' efforts and capabilities.

Every day your daughter should be spending a minimum of 2 hours on her homework, assignments and revision as well as extra time for study and reading. To help students, parents should discuss their work and outwardly show interest in their learning. This could involve regularly asking them about their learning and helping them to establish a study plan to achieve their goals. Successful students always identify family support as a key element to achieving their success and acknowledge the support accordingly.

Ad Astra! Aim for your very best this term!

Ms George and Ms Andrews  
**Deputy Principal and Relieving Deputy Principal**

## HEAD TEACHER ADMINISTRATION REPORT

The text messaging system is a very valuable tool in tracking student attendance. If your daughter has been late to or absent from school, you would have received a text message from the school that asks you for a reply text. It is very important that you make contact with the school at your earliest convenience via text reply or phone call so your daughter's school records can be updated to justify her absence.

The effectiveness of the text messaging system in ensuring the safety of your daughter relies on you responding to the text by explaining the nature of your daughter's absence, her name and roll call class.

If you have any concerns about the text message system please contact the school.

Any parents and students that intend on taking leave to travel for holidays must contact the school office prior to departing and document the length of time they will be away.

Over the year many families have changed their personal and contact details because they have moved house, changed telephone companies or obtained a new mobile phone number. It is very important that you inform the school immediately of any changes you make. There have been several incidents at school where the school has needed to contact parents in an emergency and have not had the most up to date contact numbers.

**If you change your mobile phone details it is very important that you inform the school immediately.**

**Early Leaver Passes** – Parents who wish their daughters to leave school early for medical appointments must provide a written note including contact details, for their daughter to bring to school. This note must be presented to the Head Teacher Administration **before 8:20 AM** on the day the student needs to leave early. After this time, parents will be required to come to the school and sign their daughters out at the front office. **Students will be required to obtain and submit a medical certificate to the Reception office on the next day they return to school, in order for the partial absence to be justified on the roll system.**

### **Lateness to School**

A reminder that **lessons begin at 8:30 AM** at Birrong Girls High School. It is important to note that when a student is late to school, this not only affects the learning of the student that is late, but also the learning of every student in the class, as the lesson must be interrupted so the teacher can address the issue. Students that are persistently

late to school will have consequences given to them.

### **SkoolBag App**

BGHS uses the SkoolBag App to help us communicate more effectively with our school community. SkoolBag delivers school notices directly to parents and students free of charge. Download the App from either the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and search for Birrong Girls to be kept up to date with information about the school and receive notes that you may need.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mr Clark

**Head Teacher Administration**

## **CAREERS NEWS**

### **Year 8/9 ASPIRE**

On Thursday 5 September, 30 Year 8 selected students accompanied by 5 Year 9 selected students from BGHS arrived at the UNSW campus where the staff from ASPIRE kindly welcomed us. On the day, Year 8 and 9 students were split up and taken to different areas of the university. Year 8 got to experience a taste of university life, while returning Year 9 students participated in a Design Thinking workshop, where we received information about the topic, Design Thinking. Collaborating with different schools (including Punchbowl Boys, Auburn Girls, Birrong Boys, Condell Park) in small groups, we were given the encouragement to work together and find a meaningful solution to a problem that surrounded the subject of "shelter". Using a number of materials we worked together to assemble our ideas, to design and develop a new product to solve this potential problem. We later presented our innovative designs and ideas to each other. We were also given a tour of the UNSW Maker Space, which featured a woodmaking space as well as a 3D printing space that was used by enrolled students to generate their ideas and design developing products as a creative approach to finding significant solutions to real-world problems. At first, it was mildly challenging for students to work with others from different schools, but after a couple of activities and games which focused on teamwork and getting to know each other, we were able to work together and carry out our ideas. We left that day having met amazing girls and boys and formed many new friendships. From this experience, we were able to be a part of an enjoyable and inspiring workshop and we learned that it is possible to "turn our ideas into reality."

**By: B. Al Jiboori and F. Thomas, Year 9**



### **Year 10**

Our final week of Work Experience is fast approaching and will begin on Monday 2 December. A number of students have already secured placements and handed in their completed forms. Please discuss this program with your daughter/ward and support them in organising a placement and returning their completed form ASAP. If you have any questions or concerns please call the school.

### **Year 11**

The "Are You HSC Ready Program?" has begun and already Year 11 students are showing an impressive and serious attitude towards their final year of schooling. In the Careers sessions we are discussing post school options, the UAC application process, adjustment factors (bonus points), early entry schemes, scholarships and much more. Year 11 students are encouraged to start booking appointment times so we can sit down and start discussing post school pathways and mapping out suitable career plans.

Ms Wailes/Ms Shinas  
**Careers Advisers**

## WELFARE REPORT

### School Liaison Police Presentations

The School Liaison Police have presented to our Years 7, 8 and 9 focusing on building our students' understanding of using the internet and social media platforms and applications in a responsible, informed and safe manner. Students were informed about cyber safety and the legal consequences of internet misuse and cyberbullying.

### Student of the Month



Congratulations to Vyvan Nham of Year 11 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for July 2019. She has demonstrated dedication, commitment and citizenship to the school community. She is a mature and positive student with excellent performance and technology skills.

Vyvan has carried out valuable school service, demonstrating responsibility, leadership and dedication as a valued member of the Media Team over the past three years where she has been involved in the creation of various media products that have been used for Harmony Day, International Women's Day and Education Week events. She has shared her technological expertise through her delivery of tutorials to other students and she has also assisted teachers.

As a talented CAPA student, Vyvan has performed musical items and created wonderful artworks over the years at the CAPA Extravaganza. Outside of school Vyvan devotes time to online platforms that enable her to work creatively with drawing, digital media, photography and writing prose fiction and poetry. Musically she focuses on enhancing her piano playing skills. She has also developed a passion for learning languages and learning about other cultures. So far she has devoted time to learning Japanese, French, Korean and Russian.

Her future goal is to attend university to attain a degree in social work. As a future social worker, she hopes to support those in difficult situations, troubled youth, the homeless and minority groups. Vyvan hopes to make a positive impact on the lives of those less fortunate, and will strive to promote change and equality for a better future. She also aims to travel widely and experience different cultures and to use her artistic talents to freelance as an artist or photographer.



Congratulations to Breanna Davies of Year 11 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for August 2019. She has demonstrated a mature and dedicated approach to her studies thus attaining commendable academic results.

Breanna has carried out valuable school service through her active involvement and dedication in various school teams and events. She has actively participated in the UTS STEM program over the years and was successful in being selected to attend the National Youth Science Forum. As a Peer Reading Tutor, she has encouraged and assisted Year 7 students to improve their literacy skills and she was a supportive Peer Support leader to Year 7 students. Breanna shows responsible citizenship, as a past member of the Environmental Team and as an active member of the Amnesty International Team, participating in the Zonta Birthing Kit assembly project and fundraising events.

Her future goal is to attend university to attain a degree in the field of science to pursue a career in forensics or astrobiology or to pursue a path in game design. Breanna plans to travel around Australia to explore our vast country.



Congratulations to Amor Elsaid of Year 12 who has been awarded the Student of the Month Award for September 2019. She has demonstrated strong citizenship and commitment to the school community. Amor has demonstrated a mature and positive attitude and has consistently applied herself to her studies.

Amor has carried out valuable school service, demonstrating leadership and initiative as a member of the prefect body and as an SRC member. She has participated in and volunteered at various fundraising and formal school events, such as Parent/Teacher evenings. Amor has been a supportive and encouraging peer support leader and peer reading tutor, assisting Year 7 students with their transition to high school and their literacy development. Amor has enthusiastically participated in the FOCUS program enhancing her leadership and work skills. Amor is environmentally minded and has a passion for preserving the Earth and readily participates in environmentally friendly campaigns and initiatives such as using biodegradable products, recycling, Clean Up Australia Day and Earth Hour.

Her future goal is to attend university to attain a double degree in education and psychology to

pursue a career in teaching. She aims to engage in voluntary marine conservation programs overseas in countries such as Croatia or the Philippines. Amor hopes to be able to travel widely, in particular around Europe, and use her teaching and psychology qualifications overseas.

Ms Salvagio  
Head Teacher Female Students

### YEAR 11 HOSPITALITY EXCURSION TO KRIO KRUSH/MELT HOUSE PIZZA RESTAURANT



Recently, Year 11 Hospitality attended an excursion to the KRIO Krush Factory, which specialises in all-natural savoury seasonings, herbs and spices. Upon arrival, we were split into two groups, one group was given a tour of the factory and an insight of how the production process works, whilst the other group was given demonstrations on how to effectively cook with KRIO spices in order to make flavoursome foods.

During the tour we were shown the different steps on how the spices were produced and the precautions that were taken in order to make top quality herbs and spices. They gave us insight on the production process and the different ways they maintain freshness and quality in their products, by the different storage methods to their packaging. It allowed Year 11 Hospitality students to witness procedures and processes being applied in a real work environment, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding for our studies.

The chefs demonstrated ways KRIO spices can be used to enhance and add flavour in various dishes, whilst giving us many delicious dishes to taste. We were given the opportunity to buy their different herbs and spices, which many of us bought, to bring home to our families.

We also had the incredible opportunity to eat at the delicious Melt House Pizza restaurant. We were welcomed by unique cultural designs of the restaurant and kind employees that created a sense of comfort and buzzing excitement. As soon as we were seated, the delicious starters came around; cheesy garlic bread, a variety of salads

and barbeque wings with wedges. Following the remarkable starters came out the entrées, Creamy Mushroom Pasta that was extremely flavoursome, as it was also within perfect portions.



For a wonderful surprise, the owner began to set up the karaoke corner and welcomed us kindly. Then not long after, with the amazing catering, his warm welcome and delightful voice, we were all satisfyingly full, clapping and singing along, having a great time. Students were soon welcomed up to sing with everyone's encouragement, which gave us a good laugh. For dessert, we had Ben and Jerry's ice-cream to put a nice end to the incredible experience. We had gone to one of the most enjoyable excursions of all time. Overall, we would like to thank Mr Da Cunha and Ms Morozov for organising this amazing excursion, as well as KRIO Krush Factory for the very entertaining tour and tasty experience. We also thank Melt House Pizza restaurant for their incredible hospitality, welcoming environment and fun-filled karaoke with endless laughs.

By: J. Thai, R. El-Bikai and A. Doucoure,  
Year 11 Hospitality

### YEAR 7 REPTILE INCURSION



On Monday 23 September, Year 7 were invited to attend the reptile show in the school hall. Much excitement had been building up with students canvassing the experiences of past years and deciding this was an experience not to be missed.

The show began with ranger Mick slowly revealing the animals and educating students about how they should handle the animals appropriately. He also highlighted their current survival prospects and where they could be found. He began with a small tortoise and then worked through a number of lizards and cane toads before revealing the larger attractions. The stars of the show were Rosie, a 2 meter alligator, and Fluffy, an 18kg python.



Ranger Mick then provided advice on how to manage a snake bite to ensure that students were aware of what to do should they unfortunately experience or see a snake bite over the summer.

Girls were then given time to move around the hall and touch and feel the animals. Many were apprehensive at first but quickly gained the confidence needed to get the most out of the experience.

It was pleasing to see so many girls engaging with the experience and overcoming their fears of these animals. Based on the smiles and excitement, the incursion was a success with many students having had an experience that they had never had before.

Mr Saule  
**Head Teacher Science**

## **CAPA REPORT**

### **STEAM**

Over the last 6 weeks our Year 7 students have been participating in a STEAM initiative (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics), working between their subjects on interrelated projects focused on microbes. In Visual Arts, students have been working together to produce ceramic sculptures, investigative posters and observational drawings. They are now learning to use Adobe AfterEffects to animate their creations. Year 7 have been working well and creating some considered artworks which will culminate in a STEAM display later this term.



The end of Term 3 was a busy time for our extracurricular music groups, with some wonderful performances by the BGHS Pop Band and BGHS Vocal Group at the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony.

This year's Year 12 Music class also completed their HSC Practical Examinations in Term 3, with all students 'giving it their all' for their final performances in Music.

Lastly, we would like to welcome Mr David Pearson who will be teaching alongside Ms Weir and Mr Eveleigh during Term 4. Please make him feel welcome if you see him around the school grounds.

**By: CAPA Faculty**

## U/15's KNOCKOUT NETBALL



On Monday 21 October, 10 students represented Birrong Girls High School at the U/15's knockout netball competition held at Endeavour Sports Reserve.

The day was made up of 42 teams pooled into a round robin competition. Birrong Girls played against Ambervale, East Hills Girls, Bankstown Girls, Westfield Sports and Hoxton Park High Schools. Birrong Girls won 2 out of 5 games and played with outstanding sportsmanship, enthusiasm and pride!

Congratulations on an awesome day! And a special thank you to Talia Jbara for her outstanding umpiring and Shikshya Shrestha for her scoring and coaching.

Ms Hammad  
**PDHPE Faculty**

**BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL  
PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION**

**Parents are invited to attend the  
P & C MEETING  
on Wednesday 20 November 2019  
at 5pm in the Common Room**

## 2019 CSIRO STEM IN SCHOOLS VISIT BY SENATOR MEHREEN FARUQI



**Senator Mehreen Faruqi and Year 8B students**

On Wednesday 30 October, Senator Mehreen Faruqi attended the school to speak to students as part of the 2019 CSIRO STEM in Schools initiative.

The event was designed to bring together students, teachers and politicians in classrooms across Australia. As a former practising Engineer, Dr Faruqi was engaging as she described her career and life experiences as a young student, migrant, mother, academic and politician.

Students watched a brief (10 minute) vodcast about the importance of STEM careers before listening to Senator Faruqi.

Dr Faruqi spoke openly about the challenges and the enjoyment she achieved when she solved problems and applied her skills to the problems facing Australia. Students asked insightful questions about her journey and listened attentively as she spoke openly. When asked what she saw as Australia's greatest challenge, she identified climate change and drought because of our climate and the impact on disadvantaged members of the Australian community.

Students then participated in a classroom activity designed to showcase the importance of STEM, breakdown stereotypes and demonstrate the diverse and rewarding career journeys that come from pursuing STEM subjects.

We thank her for her attendance and engaging presentation.

Mr Saule  
**Head Teacher Science**



## BIRRONG GIRLS RECOGNISED AT VICTOR CHANG AWARDS



Councillor Bilal El-Hayek (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Khal Asfour (Mayor), Hanin Al Khaled and Professor Sally Dunwoodie (Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute representative)



Councillor Bilal El-Hayek (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Khal Asfour (Mayor), Angela Phan and Professor Sally Dunwoodie (Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute representative)

On Wednesday 6 November two Birrong girls were recognised for their efforts in studying Science. Hanin Al Khaled and Angela Phan were part of a select group who received the award from the Mayor of Bankstown, Khal Asfour. The award includes a behind the scenes visit to the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute to see the work being done and meet some of the scientists working to find solutions to the problems being faced by members of the community.

The ceremony began with an address by Khal Asfour. He spoke of his experience growing up wanting to peruse a career in politics because he felt that would allow him to improve the world. However, he now believed that it is scientists that change the world by finding solutions to complex problems and improving the lives of many who would otherwise struggle to survive.

The second guest speaker was Sally Dunwoodie representing the Victor Chang Cardiac Research

Institute. She spoke of her journey as a young girl growing up and wanting to understand the world and solve problems. She talked about her current work where she is trying to identify heart defects in embryos so they can be resolved before babies are born.

The final presentation saw a video of the late Dr Chang and the work he did in pioneering heart transplants and establishing the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute focused on improving the lives of people suffering heart disease.

It was pleasing to celebrate the girls' achievements and witness the pride their families had of their achievements.

Mr Saule  
**Head Teacher Science**

## L'ORÉAL GIRLS IN SCIENCE FORUM



On Wednesday 13 November a group of Year 11 Science students attended the L'Oréal Girls in Science Forum at UNSW.

The day began with students being introduced to the following inspirational women.

Professor Emma Johnson welcomed the girls to the university and spoke about her role as the Dean of Science at UNSW. She talked about her role in supervising 600 researchers across all fields of Science and described the need to engage in cross disciplinary skills to achieve discoveries. She

highlighted the research that indicated 75% of new jobs being created required STEM skills with data analysis being an area of significant growth in demand. She talked about her limited confidence growing up despite her successes in her career and how she looked for role models to develop her confidence.

The fellowship winners were then introduced.

Dr Ashley Hood described her work in looking at reefs and trying to better explain the evolutionary mankind so we can better predict the future. She would use the funding to research a remote corner of Canada to try and make climate change predictions.

Dr Lisa Gluckhova, a molecular/ structural biologist, described her work in investigating the way cancers occur and what can be done to better understand the molecules involved in disease. She talked about balancing her work and family commitments and the flexibility she experienced.

Dr Samantha Solon-Biet talked about her research involving mothers' diets during pregnancy and how the uterus can be impacted by the mother's diet. She talked about how everyone had a different protein set point where we feel full and what determines that value that can lead to obesity.

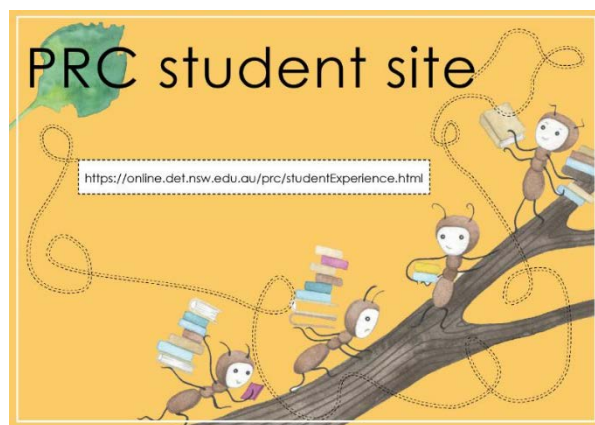
Dr Valerie Sung described her research work into the genetic causes of hearing loss and the environmental factors that impact on children's hearing loss and treatment. She talked about her challenges in helping parents understand the challenges and supporting anxious parents.

Finally, Dr Yvonne Anderson described her work in helping treat obese children and research into helping communities that are over represented statistically. Her approach involved going out to people and making service more available to disadvantaged communities. This involved healthy lifestyle choices and education.

Students participated in a Q&A forum where a variety of questions were asked and the common theme of finding your passion and working hard to achieve it were identified. The students then attended a Careers fair where they moved between stations highlighting different courses offered at UNSW and the career opportunities that could follow.

The girls then participated in a walking tour of the university before returning back to school (quite tired). The opportunity to see Science careers and role models was described as inspirational by a number of students.

Mr Saule  
**Head Teacher Science**



**Congratulations to the 46 students who completed the 2019 Premier's Reading Challenge. You will soon receive your certificates.**

**Birrong Girls' Drama Club, Centre Stage, are proud to present our debut performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.**

Join us as we travel through the urban forest in a contemporary, dark re-imagining of one of William Shakespeare's best loved plays. Four young lovers, feuding fairies and a group of amateur players draw you into their world – it's bound to be terrific fun.

One performance only! Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November @ 3:30pm in the Birrong Girls Hall.

Cast and crew will be selling tickets from 11<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> November for \$5.00.

**BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR**  
*For your diary / noticeboard*

<b>November:</b>	
Wednesday, 20 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 12 sign-out, 8:30am – 10:30am only
Wednesday, 20 <sup>th</sup>	▪ P&C Meeting, Common Room, 5pm
Thursday, 21 <sup>st</sup>	▪ Year 12 Formal
Friday, 22 <sup>nd</sup>	▪ Year 11 Life Ready Program
Thursday, 28 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Birrong Girls' Drama Club performance in the Hall at 3:30pm
Thursday, 28 <sup>th</sup> and Friday, 29 <sup>th</sup>	▪ Year 10 Peer Support Training

## FROM THE ENGLISH DESK

All of the English teachers wish their Year 12 students all the very best as they work through their HSC examinations.

We wanted to share with you an exemplary discursive text that one of our Advanced students, Farah Alameddine, created. We feel very strongly that it is a well crafted and insightful piece of discursive writing that will serve to guide future students. We would like to acknowledge Ms Andrews for the expert instruction of her Year 12 Advanced English class.

It was a joyous day, the day I found myself to be a villain.

In today's socio-political climate, the term 'victim' is often exclusively associated with people from racial minorities, and 'perpetrator' is a term often exclusively associated with Trump and his supporters. 2016 was a rough road. The global news depicted Trump's election, a rise in Islamophobia, ferocious white supremacy, and the fortification of the value of all cultural minority groups. Me and my Lebanese heritage being one of them.

The media was finally in my favour.

I remember, in the spring of 2017, attending a protest regarding President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, discounting Palestine and all the history of its blood drenched soil. Discounting the graves that lie in it, the babies born on it. We were bringing an end to white supremacy and imperialism, the world's most violent ideologies.

My voice was drowned out, we didn't mind the melding of sweaty bodies, the gleaming smiles that split our flushed cheeks stood testament to our camaraderie. I arrived home with a red-raw throat and a goofy smile. I didn't mind the spit flying from the mouths of spirited protestors, and I felt like a small flame in this torrent of lava, burning through concrete streets and leaving open mouthed spectators in our wake. We were roaring, and for once, I felt people sit up and take notice.

But, despite the statistics showing that in a six-month period 62 Palestinians were killed, 3494 injured, and 3545 detained on unsubstantiated charges. Despite all the atrocities circulating social media, our protest, our testament to the strength of human will, supported by the mainstream media, was quashed. George Orwell once stated, '*every existence is inherently political.*' I took this as a static binary, every existence was political in that it was the holder of power or was the victim. I saw myself to be the victim. The only politicisation of my existence, I thought, was as a testament to the powers of European imperialism and the domestication of the Orient.

Rather than the thunderous change I envisioned us to be, we were branded anti-Semitic. We were complicit in a worldwide, historic tradition of Jewish persecution.

Milo Yiannopoulos went live on twitter to say that '*Muslims are allowed to get away with almost anything...They're allowed to engage in the most brazen anti-Semitism.*'

The small flame within me flickered, and I remembered the burly ginger man with a gleaming cross around his neck standing beside me in the protest, helping a burqa clad lady from having her sign snatched by sour civilians.

That was the first strike I found in Yiannopoulos' argument.

In giving a voice to the voiceless, I couldn't see how we could be the perpetrators.

My people had been persecuted in the historic and modern sphere. I was angry. Offended. I saw Yiannopoulos as only a villain perpetuating villainous ideologies entrenched into our villainous Western society. Imperialism and white supremacy.

I was wrong.

Facing the weirdly empty florescence of my laptop, trying desperately to find like-minded people, I stumbled across homelands torn in two. Minorities I thought had to be unequivocally unified in the face of white supremacy, were in disagreement amongst themselves. They debated the violent history of coloured groups, and instead of taking this as human nature, instead of acknowledging the fact that racial minorities are not free from violence, I took them to be subscribing to supremacist dogma.

I dug deeper.

In those coffee saturated nights of wide eyed frenzy, I learnt that during the same six-month period I was horrified over, Palestinians killed at least 15 Israelis, including 10 security officers, and injured 129 in conflict-related incidents in the West Bank and Israel. Although the numbers are diminutive in comparison to the Palestinian casualties, the taking of human life is unforgivable.

Although this revelation did nothing to change my criticism of Israel's crimes and my recognition of Palestine's dehumanisation, it constituted a major shift in my worldview of racial tensions, and my view of myself.

I learned the histories of Spain and Algeria, under Arabian conquest and imperialism. My ancestors' conquests and imperialism.

While European colonialism and imperialism (both being general terms of abuse by now) are blamed by increasingly liberal 'Social Justice Warriors' for every ill on earth, and something for which all Europeans are made to feel ashamed, Arab imperialism is held up as something of which Muslims can be proud, something to be lauded and admired.

I still stand firm in my belief that oppressive post-colonial ideologies are a major hindrance to the progression of our so called 'third world' nations. Nations like India, Iraq who have plethora's of natural resources and geographical advantages are pillaged because the Western world holds too much power.

I must admit that I had wished for my history to be better than it was, wished to make a positive impact on the global image of my race, to empower the disempowered. While it was easy to stand with like-minded people and chant by the fire of our own righteousness, I forgot that I have the capacity to be both. Both the monsoon and the budding of small poppies in the rain. The perpetrator and the victim. Because George Orwell was right, '*every existence is inherently political,*' we all know, intimately, both sides of the whip. Have felt it in our hands and against our backs.

In understanding imperialism at its most basic, as a struggle for power, an evil familiar to all skin colours and faces, we can stop the vicious cycle, to which we are both perpetrators and victims.

I was just too afraid to claim it all. In all its ugly glory.

**By: Farah Alameddine, Year 12 Advanced English**