

in this issue

Mentoring and developing women leaders in our schools



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**In Alliance
Editorial Deadlines**

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through music*

Articles and photographs should
be emailed to the Editor at
agsa@agsa.org.au

From the President...

Judith Poole



The Alliance - embracing new partnerships

Providing leadership in educating girls in girls' schools and developing young women leaders for tomorrow are two important focus areas for the Alliance. Activities in the State Branches combined with the Senior Leadership Conference held at Bond in May have stimulated our fine educators to reflect on how best to work within our schools. Research into women and leadership continues to be of interest as we prepare our girls for their place in the world. This edition of *In Alliance* provides research on the importance of networking and mentoring for women.

Building strong relationships with other organisations that enhance our ability to deliver our vision is important. Our newest partner is Bond University and we applaud them for supporting our international events and providing high level speakers for our branch meetings. The Student Leadership Conference for 2014 will be held at Bond University with Rising Generations coordinating the program. We look forward to introducing our members to Catherine O'Sullivan, Pro Vice-Chancellor Pathways and Partnerships, and her colleagues as they visit the various branch meetings. We continue to work closely with CIRCLE and World Challenge and thank them for their sponsorship.

At the AGM in May, several new members were welcomed to the Executive team. Tasmania's new representative is Tom Dorey, Principal of St Mary's College in Hobart, and Western Australia's new representative is Jenny Ethell, Principal of Perth College. Executive members serve a term of three years and are appointed by the branch members of their region. I am pleased to announce that Roz Mexted from New Zealand stepped up into the Vice President's position and is helping to coordinate the upcoming conference in Wellington next year.

I would like to thank the outgoing Executive member, Lynne Thomson from St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, who has served the Alliance for six years. We also farewell Robyn Kronenberg, Principal of

St Michael's Collegiate in Hobart, who finishes her term as President of the Alliance. Robyn's leadership has been inspiring and her vision in implementing the current strategic plan has seen the Alliance raise its profile in terms of research, communication with members and expanding into the Asia Pacific area. On behalf of all the Alliance members I extend a heartfelt thank you to both Lynne and Robyn for their outstanding service.



We will also be saying goodbye to our wonderful Executive Officer, Jan Butler, as she will be retiring at the end of October. Jan has given eight years of exceptional service to the Alliance and we thank her for her dedication and professionalism. The Alliance is stronger than ever before with active branches, consistently strong annual student leadership conferences and diverse biennial Staff Conferences which focus on research in educating girls in girls' schools. Jan has raised the level of our magazine and website during her tenure and has provided solid support for the Executive Board members. I am sure you will join me in wishing Jan well as she prepares for the next stage of her life.

Judith Poole

FOR YOUR DIARY
Visit the website for more details

27 September 2013	Student Leadership Conference registration payments due from schools
18-20 November 2013	GSA Annual Conference, Gateshead Hilton Hotel, UK
15-19 January 2014	Alliance Student Leadership Conference, Bond University, Gold Coast, Qld
7-9 February 2014	National Conference on Girls' Education (NCGE), Co-hosted by Young Women's Leadership Network and National Coalition of Girls' Schools at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel, US
25-28 May 2014	Alliance Biennial Staff Conference, <i>Creative Girls, Creative Women</i> , Amora Hotel, Wellington, New Zealand

From the Editor...

Jan Butler



Plans are progressing for the Student Leadership Conference to be held at Bond University from 15-19 January 2014 and I encourage you to register your student leaders for this annual event. The girls and staff will be staying at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort, not far from the university, and we will be organising buses for transport between the two venues. It will add yet another dimension to the conference as the girls experience resort accommodation as well as the architecturally unique and relatively new Bond University.

School Registrations will close on 27 September. Please ensure that payment is made at the time of registration to secure places for one or two of your 2014 student leaders, even though you may not know who they are till later in the year. If there are still vacancies after this date, places will be offered to extra students from schools. Unpaid registrations will be cancelled, so don't let your students miss out – register **and pay** by 27 September!

The Biennial Conference in Wellington from 25-28 May 2014 promises to be a worthwhile event for staff. Our competition to find a suitable logo for the conference theme of *Creative Girls, Creative Women* had 31 entries, all of a high standard, and it was very hard for the judges to choose the final winner. The logo selected was created by Lucy Fraser of St Catherine's NSW, and this will be incorporated into our publicity and program for the conference. Congratulations to Lucy who has won \$200.

We thank two guest writers, Karen Spiller and Nicole Archard, for our Research pages of this issue; their work in the area of mentoring ably qualified them to write on this topic. Six member schools and the Women's College of the University of Sydney, one of our affiliate organisations, share their insights and programs in this magazine.

The branches have been active recently with breakfasts, lunches and dinners for staff and students, and we have highlighted some of these activities in the magazine. Our Researcher, Kate Broadley, has been visiting the branches to talk to members about the research into girls' education which she summarises, and you are reminded that this research is readily available on the Alliance website. You will also find a review of our successful Middle Managers' conference held at Bond University in May.

This will be my last editorial for *In Alliance* as I have made the decision to retire on 30 October 2013 after eight years in the role of Executive Officer. I have had an incredible journey in this role, working with five Presidents and over twenty Executive members, and seeing the membership grow from just over 100 when I began in 2005 to now nearly 145. I have enjoyed organising eight Student Leadership Conferences and spending time with

our outstanding young student leaders each January. At my first SLC the 110 girls slept in school boarding houses, and at my most recent this year there were 160 girls in university student accommodation. I have seen the staff conference change from annual to biennial and move from Auckland to Queensland to Melbourne to Canberra to Sydney and back to Melbourne again. For the first time next year it will be held in a hotel in Wellington, and we are excited to be returning to New Zealand again after nine years.

In September 2005, I edited the magazine for the first time with Volume 32, and we launched our new logo with the Green, White and Violet colours in Volume 33. These were then incorporated soon after into our new look website which we again rebuilt and launched in 2011. The website continues to grow and be an important communication tool for the members, especially with the research articles prepared for us by our Researcher, Kate Broadley, who joined the Alliance team in December 2008, supporting me in many of the tasks that I do.

It has been a privilege and an honour to be able to work for this fine organisation and I am sure it will continue to grow and become even more important for all the girls we work for. I am very grateful to all the Alliance community and especially to the Executive members for their support over the years.

Jan Butler



Kate Broadley shared her research wisdom with staff from four Alliance schools in Hobart



For more information please contact
Jodie Burton at World Challenge on 0481 501 329
or jburtonworldchallenge.com.au

A program designed specifically for year 9; 'Beyond' gives students the opportunity to travel to one of five exotic locations around the world creating a journey of challenge and discovery whilst opening doors to experiences they never knew existed!

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More than mentoring

Mrs Marise McConaghy, Deputy Principal, Brisbane Girls Grammar School

Alliance schools have long recognised the importance of actively contributing to the leadership capability of both employees and students. Indeed, many of our schools were established and developed over the decades by erudite, visionary and - more often than not - quite formidable women whose stories now grace the histories and folklore of our schools, and whose work educating the young and speaking out for social justice helped shape our communities. Nurturing strong women leaders, in particular, is in the DNA of our schools. Presently, remarkable people lead, work and learn on our campuses across the country and our past students and staff continue to influence the times.

However, it is critical that we examine the state of play at the moment. Given that there has been huge progression in women's rights and access to work since the early days of our older schools, is this reflected in the leadership metrics and workplace styles in our schools now? Will there be a sufficient number

of women ready and willing to lead and manage our schools when the so-called baby boomer principal exodus occurs? It was reported in *The Age* (30 April 2012), that "Leadership in Australian Schools is about to reach tipping point". Attracting the best possible candidates into leadership positions is now a priority for educators around the world. But are we doing enough in our schools to address this? Dr Barbara Watterson (Deputy Executive Director Centre for Strategic Education) cites the salient findings of the *Staff in Australia's*

Schools 2007 Survey where the career intentions of school teachers revealed that only ten percent intended to apply for school leadership positions in the following three years and that the lack of women stepping forward to be principals is a largely under-profiled challenge. Clearly, it is a matter of urgency that our schools - and the Alliance network - focuses strategically (dare it be said, aggressively?) on developing the next era of leaders, particularly women, for our schools.

In Queensland, Karen Spiller's *Aspiring Women's Conference* initiative at St Aidan's School has attracted hundreds of women over the last few years who have been so inspired and reassured by the experience that many have gone on to attain promotional positions and are currently stretching their leadership capabilities in roles across the country. Being able to access information and experts on high level leadership and governance, while hearing firsthand accounts of leadership journeys in women-only sessions, clearly works. The advice on such critical matters as interviewing, resumé writing and personal presentation also provide aspiring women with potent practical tools which they feel sufficiently empowered to put to use. Perhaps this success has something to do with humanising or demystifying

a position which, for some women, appears only possible for star-women capable of working alone in offices seemingly cut off from the warmth, collegiality and protection of communities of classrooms and staff groups.

We know that women deselect themselves owing to their preconceived notions of readiness for a position and unrealistically high expectations of the level of skills and experience required. This is why point-at-able proactive talent identification processes and stretch opportunities need to be in place in our schools, championed by senior leaders, who ensure that mentorship, sponsorship and access to professional development experiences, networks and back-room thinking are made available to promising people in the pipelines. Certainly, some women end up in leadership positions as a matter of circumstance. Opportunities to act in school leadership positions, particularly those of Principal, help women, in particular, to see that they have far greater capacity than they imagined

"...we need to use the agency, creativity and power of our Alliance networks to create workplaces in which leaders can thrive professionally and personally."



and that the job affords its own joy, collegiality and satisfaction. However, leaving leadership to serendipitous circumstance is irresponsible, and our schools deserve better. Watterson believes that more needs to be done to encourage aspiring young teachers to step into leadership positions earlier: "If a good proportion of our workforce are females and they are not applying in droves, we really need to ask ourselves why are we missing out on this talent, what it is that we can get them to consider and how we can develop those skills?" Jackson (2012) takes it further, "Unless your organization institutes a structured process to track and develop future leaders from the lower levels...you are jeopardizing continued growth and success...and your corporate performance overall".

Research has found that mentoring is a strategic way for organisations to develop talent, pass on wisdom, manage succession planning and strengthen workplace performance. It is contagious, powerful and positive. Sheryl Sandberg's book *Lean In* takes this further. In her chapter on mentoring, not only does she maintain that mentoring is critical for career progression, but she demonstrates that women also need sponsors who will use their influence to advocate for them. She says that while women who

find mentors through formal programs are 50% more likely to be promoted than women who find them on their own, these programs are not sufficient and must be used with other forms of development, training and targeted support. In *Harvard Business Review* (2011), Sylvia Hewlett aligns with Sandberg as she maintains that women who are qualified to lead often simply don't have the powerful backing necessary to inspire, propel, and protect them on their journey through upper management. She sees that mentors listen, nurture, question and provide wise advice and general strategy, while sponsors actively use their influence and seniority to advocate and locate a candidate's next promotion. Clearly, the importance of relationship capital – through formal and informal mentoring programs, performance coaching and active sponsorship – is crucial to the development and placement of leaders, both women and men.

Our Alliance schools are very special places and we share a passionate commitment to the development of our girls and all those who work in our network. It is critical that the challenge of developing people who will be leading our schools in the future is addressed in a proactive, evidence-based, strategic manner. The "White Elephant" (Karen Spiller, 2012, Alliance Network Evening) in this article is, quite obviously, that some women choose to limit their career aspirations owing to their concerns about capacity to sustain family life with a demanding leadership position. However, we cannot let this hold us back from whole-heartedly investing in those employees who possess talent and high leadership potential and we need to use the agency, creativity and power of our Alliance networks to create workplaces in which leaders can thrive professionally and personally. The opportunity to use current research about leadership development to strategically identify and develop potential leaders for succession planning in our schools, and the capacity to strengthen educational leadership and reform in the sector, is an exciting challenge – and critical for our young women.

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The global status of women: Future Problem Solving Competition

Imagine an exchange program where men swapped places with women and were able to understand first-hand the discrimination against women. That is St Cuthbert's College student Elizabeth Huang's award-winning solution to problems women face around the globe. She is the international winner of the Future Problem Solving competition held in June in the United States.



Elizabeth competed against other high school students in the Middle Divisions' Individual Booklet category. She has entered the competition for the past three years and came first in New Zealand in her category in 2012.

The competition required her to research thoroughly this year's topic, *The Global Status of Women*, and identity challenges that girls and women face across the globe, such as no access to education and a lack of leadership roles. Elizabeth's solution was an exchange program, where men experience what it's like to be a woman: to be discriminated against and perceived differently.

In addition to winning the competition, undertaking such thorough research on women in society has given Elizabeth an understanding of the issue far beyond her 15 years of age. "The biggest surprise for me was that in developed countries like New Zealand there isn't as much discrimination against women compared to developing countries, so we think it's not so much of an issue. But nowhere in the world are women equal to men."

Elizabeth says in particular she noticed big gaps between the sexes in leadership roles - there are very few women CEOs or on the boards of businesses. There's also the well-known wage difference. Although we've had two female New Zealand Prime Ministers, Elizabeth says women are still underrepresented in parliament. The run-on effect of this is less focus on policies for women's issues.

"I think because we got over obvious issues like girls going to school we don't realise there are still cultural limitations for girls. The way they are brought up is different. Girls aren't given as many positive leadership models as boys and they don't aspire to it as much."

As a student of an all-girls College, Elizabeth knows she is in a more fortunate position than many other girls. All girls are given leadership opportunities at St Cuthbert's throughout their entire time at the College. Elizabeth says at an all-girls school there are positive role models everywhere – from our principal Lynda Reid, to Old Girls, to guest speakers and our Writers in Residence.

"My research showed me how lucky we are at St Cuthbert's to be in the position where we have those leaders – and highlighted to me that society needs to change to offer the wonderful opportunities I have been given to other girls."

Perhaps the most wonderful part of this experience (other than collecting her hard-earned prize!), is that Elizabeth herself has become a positive role model for younger students in the St Cuthbert's College community. She's had girls approach her and give their congratulations and say how proud they are of her success. Elizabeth is happy to take on a leadership role because all her research has shown her how important they are to girls.

"It's quite cool that other students are seeing their own potential after seeing the success of someone close to them – it's attainable and relatable for the girls."

Transition points: mentoring young women

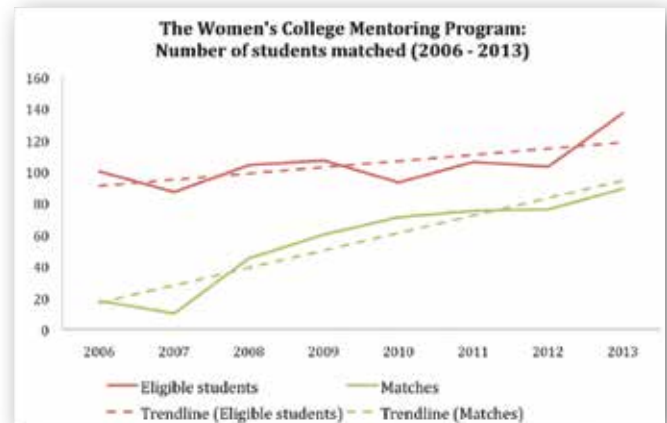
Dr Tiffany Donnelly, Vice Principal, The Women's College, University of Sydney

Women's professional advancement has been the focus of considerable recent research and media interest in Australia and abroad, and discussions of mentoring programs have proliferated on the back of evidence that mentoring is a critical component to professional success (Neal, Boatman & Miller, 2013, p. 3). Women in particular benefit from mentoring because in addition to building strategic networks, mentoring can work to counter gender discrimination and other obstacles to women's advancement (Tharenou, 2005, p. 79). What is not as well documented is the important headway that can be gained by introducing mentoring to young women while they are still engaged in educational contexts. Early intervention in the form of professional mentoring has the scope to unleash leadership capabilities and shape career choices, setting up a paradigm of mentoring which assists lifelong learning and enhanced professional development.

Doyen of the Australian mentoring landscape Wendy McCarthy has noted the importance of mentoring at transition points in women's lives and careers, including the move "from an educational environment to a work culture" (2008, p. 19). The professional mentoring program currently in place at the University of Sydney's Women's College provides a good case study by which to gauge the positive effects of mentoring in an educational context. For young women still engaged in formal study, mentoring can be a catalyst to wider career choice, greater self-confidence and the inception of strategic thinking about career. Mentoring assists young women with expectations around professional etiquette and bearing when they enter the workforce, and encourages them to set goals and to reach for benchmarks they may not have otherwise envisioned for themselves.

While formal mentoring programs are a familiar feature of corporate life, fewer programs exist in universities and the Women's College program is relatively unique in the Australian residential college scene. The benefits of instituting a formal program are palpable, as there is strong evidence to show that "formal mentoring programs provide an easier way for women to find mentors" (Neal et.al., 2013, p. 9). Fostering a culture of mentoring in educational institutions can harness the positive effects of mentoring, setting young women on a path to greater self-determination and ultimately enhancing their chances of professional success. By familiarising them with mentoring in a formal educational context, young women who gain from this early experience are more likely to seek out mentors in their working life.

The mentoring program at the Women's College forms part of an integrated program providing students with assistance over the entire scope of their College career; it's the last in a series of positive interventions which begins with the transition into university life, assists with academic support throughout their degree programs, and ultimately sees students transition into professional life. Established in 2006, the program matches senior undergraduate and postgraduate students with a professional mentor (usually a woman) in the field they are aiming to work when they graduate. For both mentors and mentees, the time commitment is fairly small: four meetings over the course of an academic year. When the program was first instituted in the College, the uptake was small but this number has grown steadily, relative to the number of eligible students, as can be seen in the figure below.



“For young women still engaged in formal study, mentoring can be a catalyst to wider career choice, greater self-confidence and the inception of strategic thinking about career.”

The range of professions to which College women aspire varies widely and shifts annually, and the key challenge of the program is finding appropriate mentors. This is where strong alumnae networks have proved invaluable. On average more than half of the mentees in the program are matched with mentors who are Women's College alumnae. Other mentors are drawn from the wider College network (largely from university and professional connections).



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Mentors provide excellent role models for female students, and survey data from the Women's College program has been consistently positive in this regard. Mentees pointed to the benefits of receiving information about organisational cultures, advice on further study, assistance with job applications, access to networks, workplace visits or work experience, and general personal support. "It was great to be able to see the different directions my study can take," noted one mentee, "and be guided through the difficult process of making big career decisions." Another stated: "the experience has been fantastic. Not only did my mentor strive to get to know me and help me wherever she could, she also invited me to various professional events that proved extremely beneficial to my career plans." A special relationship forged with a mentor has also been linked to philanthropic giving back to institutions in later life (Clotfelter, 2003, p. 115).

For schools, the signs are clear: utilise the inherent rich resource in existing alumnae networks. Year 12 students often find the transition to university study or their first job challenging without the safe boundaries that the school context has provided for them. It may be that a mentor drawn from the alumnae body who is in their third or fourth year of study with similar academic interests, or an alumna three or four years into her working life in a similar field, could be greatly beneficial to transitioning senior students. A program such as this in a school could complement existing student mentor programs and set the scene for girls to develop mentoring relationships beyond school and university.

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Panel discussion on leadership and mentoring L-R: Women's College Vice Principal Dr Tiffany Donnelly, Principal Dr Amanda Bell, and Senior Resident Assistant Ms Elizabeth Palmer



Mentee/Mentor pair 4th year Chemical Engineering student Megan Goonetilleke and mentor Sarah Sivyser



Career discussions at Women's College Mentoring Dinner



Women's College Principal Dr Amanda Bell addresses a seminar on student leadership

Mentoring and developing future women leaders

Karon Graham, Dean of Students, Somerville House

How do women become school leaders in independent schools? The answer to this is, "It's complicated and never the same journey." What works for one woman, may not necessarily work for another.

In the book, *Through the Labyrinth: Real Answers on How Women Become Leaders* (2007) Eagly and Carli explain that the new metaphor for women reaching promotional positions is through the 'labyrinth' rather than breaking the 'glass ceiling'. The labyrinth is a much more organic concept than the glass ceiling and it better illustrates the maze which women must navigate in advancing to promotional positions in their organisations. The bottom line is that it's not easy to become a female leader and it can be just as difficult to become a female principal or deputy principal in independent girls' schools.

In independent schools, there are many formal and informal obstacles and obscure and challenging twists and turns in the journey to leadership positions for women. Women face many challenges around work-family-life balance, preconceived notions of their capacity for leadership, gender bias, poor self-image or lack of confidence, lack of encouragement or support, entrenched cultures within the school environment, including existing seniority in key positions within the school (Shakeshaft et al., 2007).

So in the face of all of these challenges how are women able to navigate and negotiate through the 'labyrinth'? In the absence of, or at the very least, limited short term programs of any formal training and preparation for leadership positions in most school systems in Australia, it has become increasingly important for women to draw on a mentor for advice and guidance. In fact, Archard (2012, p. 453) points out that the research reveals that women who were mentored had higher career advancement than those who were not.

It will come as no surprise to many women aspiring to become leaders in schools that there has been limited opportunity for mentoring in past years. Peters (2010) noted that women have experienced limited access to productive mentoring relationships, further limiting their access to school leadership positions. Essentially, the lack of mentoring, and resultant low numbers of women in school administration, limits the number of role models women can turn to when seeking positions in school administration.

Women need good role models and that often means finding other women who are leaders within the current school organisation or external to the school to become mentors. Valerio (2009) points out that women protégés want to find out how other women have dealt with the challenges associated with being a woman and a leader and how they can move through the labyrinth and be resilient in the face of obstacles (pp. 40-44).

Tjan (2009) suggests five questions that every mentor should ask of a mentee:

1. What is it that you really want to be and do?
2. What are you doing really well that is helping you get there?
3. What are you not doing well that is preventing you from getting there?
4. What will you do differently tomorrow to meet those challenges?
5. How can I help/ where do you need the most help?

In answering these questions, the mentee focuses more on what personal skills and circumstances she needs to change or develop for promotion to leadership positions. The mentor, on the other hand, understands the specific needs of the mentee and is therefore in a better position to provide practical suggestions and advice to facilitate the advancement of the mentee.

Somerville House is a landmark school in girls' education and we are fortunate to have an inspiring principal, Mrs Florence Kearney, who provides not only mentoring for staff members personally but also provides extensive on-going leadership development for the entire middle

management academic and corporate staff. Staff members are encouraged to seek out mentors informally as well as formally and as a result, the whole organisation benefits from continuous improvement because of the Principal's leadership in mentoring and the programs provided to staff.

The labyrinth is a reality, but the way in which we negotiate the labyrinth with the support and guidance of mentors, will ultimately make us wiser and richer for the experience and certainly over time provide many more fine female leaders in our schools.



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Developing capability – peer support mentoring

Lee-Anne Marsh, Coordinator of Wellbeing, Toorak College

Personal and social capability is one of the seven general capabilities outlined in the Australian Curriculum. At the core of personal and social capability is the social and emotional learning of students; it focuses on individuals learning to understand themselves and others and, in the process, more effectively manage the many facets of their lives including their relationships, work and learning (ACARA, 2012). Peer mentoring/peer support is an effective way through which students can develop the many facets of this capability.

Research into the effectiveness of Peer Support Programs has highlighted the positive impact these programs can have on the wellbeing of students.

A study conducted by Dr Louise Ellis from the University of Western Sydney in 2003 involved surveying over 2,300 secondary school students enrolled in Years 7, 10 and 11 who were participants in Peer Support Programs. This study found benefits for both the younger students who were being mentored as well as for the older students who had taken on the role of mentor. The Peer Leaders indicated that being a mentor was valuable to their personal growth and development, including an improvement in their leadership skills. For many students, being involved in the program assisted in improving their communication skills. The findings also indicated that peer support programs promoted the development of friendships between older and younger students, changed the perceptions of bullying, enhanced problem solving and decision making skills, and had positive impacts on students' sense of self-confidence and self worth (Ellis, 2005).

Initially, the Peer Mentoring Program at Toorak College involved Year 8 students working with Year 7 students. The main aim was to assist the Year 7s in making a smooth transition from their primary years to their secondary schooling, whilst also providing the Year 8s with opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Organised contact between the two groups occurred on two days, with the expectation that the older students would continue this contact during lunchtimes and through events such as House activities. Whilst this assisted the Year 7s in their transition into the secondary schooling, the age difference between the two groups was not significant enough for the Year 8s to really be viewed as leaders by the girls they were mentoring. Lack of formal opportunities for contact between the two groups was also considered to be an issue.

A review of the Peer Mentoring Program resulted in staff undergoing training provided by Peer Support Australia; this organisation “provides school communities with an evidence-based, peer led approach to enhance the mental, social and emotional wellbeing of young people”. This more formal approach to peer support/mentoring requires Year 10 or 11 students to work with small groups of Year 7 students. The program “empowers

young people to support each other and contribute positively to society” (Peer Support Australia, 2012).

At Toorak College, all Year 9 students are involved in a two day training program in preparation for becoming Peer Support Mentors in Year 10. Following the training, students volunteer to become mentors; this is an important consideration as committed and interested volunteers are more likely to deliver a successful program. For the duration of Term One, the Peer Support Mentors work with small groups of Year 7 students on a weekly basis in a timetabled lesson of one hour duration, which occurs during their assigned Personal Development lesson. The mentors

are responsible for planning and implementing activities designed to support the Year 7 students whilst promoting a sense of connectedness to the school community. The effectiveness of the program is dependent on the positive relationships that develop between the older and younger students; the older students act as role models for the younger students and have a positive influence on them.

During the one hour sessions, the Peer Support Mentors work with their group of 8-10 students on activities based around making connections with others, being organised and time management which assist students with managing the increasing demands of secondary schooling. The Year 10 students take ownership

of the lessons and initiate changes where they are needed in order to cater for the individual students they are mentoring. The program enables the mentors to develop skills they can take with them into the wider community. When a Year 10 student sees that she can effectively manage a group of 8 to 10 younger students, it gives her greater confidence about what she can do and achieve in other areas of her life. What students learn about themselves is one of the many benefits of the Peer Support Mentoring Program at Toorak College.



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Building capacity in the Primary Years

Anne Mitchell, Head of Junior School, St Peter's Girls' School

"Every student has something to offer and everyone has the capacity to influence others in a variety of ways."

St Peter's Girls' School is an authorised International Baccalaureate World School, offering the Primary Years Programme and the Diploma Programme. Our School's Mission states: *We are a community of learning that develops students' skills and attitudes to prepare them for the challenges and responsibilities of adult citizenship. By fostering an intercultural understanding within an internationally diverse and globally aware community, the development of individual character and personal achievement by all students is encouraged and celebrated.*

Our School values emphasise that each student will be treated as an individual and provided with opportunities to develop character and leadership skills and to exercise good leadership, both within and outside the School environment.

During the Primary years of schooling our students develop and grow within a classroom and pastoral care framework that offers endless opportunities for academic growth, character development and leadership. Our mantra is that 'everyone is a leader' and has the capacity to influence others, both within and beyond their peer group in a variety of ways from the moment they arrive at our School. This translates into our belief, that every student has something to offer and everyone has the capacity and potential to be an influencer. This influence and role modelling can be seen in playground behaviour. It is witnessed in student communication, in active listening between students, in demonstrations of empathy, problem solving and decision making. Student leadership opportunities evolve through our Junior School buddy program, from the organisation and planning of Parent-Sharing events, our Peer-Support program, classroom responsibilities, Student Representative Council (SRC) roles, Assembly responsibilities, event coordination, service and mission leadership.

As students pass through the Junior School our *Social Skills and Getting-Along* program assists and empowers all students to identify issues clearly, and feel confident in applying a range of strategies to solve these issues should they arise. If further discussion is required a 'facts, fairness, feelings' discussion is set up with a mediator and this in turn empowers all students to control or select their own solutions and move forward. By identifying problems, trying strategies and being empowered in their decision making, students build self-discipline, collaboration, communication, confidence and influence within their peer group.



Year 6 House Leaders talking with Year 3 students



Year 6 Leaders of 2013 with Head of Junior School, Anne Mitchell, and Year 6 Teachers, Vicky Charlton and Cassandra Moore

All teachers in the Junior School play a role in nurturing and developing the capacity of our youngest leaders. As their everyday mentors, facilitators and role models, our staff are aware of the important role they play in building the capacity and influence of all students. Beginning with a clear understanding of their pastoral care role, opportunities continue to build through the classroom SRC meetings. These meetings are structured and follow a particular format with classroom representatives gradually assuming leadership as they develop the confidence and independence to do so. Student participation is also high in the organisation and participation of our weekly assemblies. All year levels plan and co-ordinate two to three assemblies per year.

As the students continue to move through the Junior School, they experience and witness leadership in many forms. Through House membership, the School Chapel program, School sport, drama, language and music programs they begin to develop and become aware of their own strengths, interests and capacity.

As students enter Year 6, the final year of the Junior School, all students take on a leadership role and proudly wear a gold pin. Firm in our belief that every student has something to offer and everyone has the capacity and potential to influence, the students are presented with a variety of leadership roles and have the opportunity to choose a role that best fits their sphere of influence and personal capacity.

Leadership opportunities are offered within the four House groups and include, House Leaders, Athletics Captains, Quiz Captains, Swimming Captains and T-ball Captains. The SRC offers leadership roles to

the Year 6 students. Under the continuing guidance of a Junior School SRC teacher, the Year 6 SRC representatives plan, organise and take full responsibility for the running of the SRC meetings and functions. The House leadership positions are peer nominated and the remaining roles of Chapel leadership, Choir leadership and Technical leadership are committee roles and participation is selected by the students.

The Peer Support Leadership Program has been successfully introduced this year, and now extends the opportunity for every student to be involved in a more structured peer mentoring program with students from Years 3, 4 and 5.

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. – John Quincy Adams

Mentoring and developing women leaders

Dr Helen McDonald, Director of Curriculum, St Catherine's School, Victoria

In the girls' school sector, we are blessed with many great female role models in terms of leadership. Women in girls' schools rarely have to adjust their leadership style to suit a particular paradigm. They lead 'as women for women', applying the skills which often make them great leaders: empathy, insight, collaborative and communicative styles and a willingness to nurture the talents of others.

We must be careful with generalisations because every woman will lead according to her own unique style and there will be stories of women leaders who showed little empathy or who had few collaborative skills. However, within generalisations there is often a greater truth and I would argue that for many, the mentoring that exists between experienced and inexperienced teachers in girls' schools is usually warm and generous.

In our schools, women hold significant leadership positions which means that young girls and young teachers are able to benefit from an environment where that is the norm. Seeing other women lead, in itself, sends a powerful message; it creates an expectation that women can and should be confident in their abilities. It also shows that women can direct the action, make the tough calls and handle the complexities of management.

In girls' schools there is no need to wave the feminist flag in terms of leadership – it is simply the status quo. However, that does not mean we can be complacent about mentoring the leaders of the future. Our responsibility to our students is to create opportunities for them to learn and lead. Likewise, our younger teachers require both the opportunity and encouragement to step up to roles which encompass greater responsibility and accountability, roles that require them to inspire and motivate others.

At St Catherine's School, we have a structured program, called *Growth and Review*, which brings together the experienced leaders in the School and those who are in the earlier stages of their professional journey. Stages One and Two of the *Growth and Review* process revolve around conversations of values (school values and personal values) and goals (school goals and personal goals). This is the most fitting place to begin, as young teachers revisit what made them join the profession in the first place. From this base they map out their immediate and longer term goals, with some clear goalposts in terms of improving student learning outcomes.

The next stage of the *Growth and Review* process revolves around coaching where all staff complete a coaching program that will assist them to support each other in terms of clarifying goals, implementing strategies and monitoring and refining progress. Coaching also helps promote a culture of trust and collaboration, one in which people can feel supported enough to challenge themselves and take risks (prime skills for leadership).

In an effort to support this new direction, I have attended an in-depth course of cognitive coaching alongside my colleague, Miss Sally Wilkinson, who is VCE Coordinator and Humanities Teacher at St Catherine's School. Through conversation, coaching practice and reflection, our joint journey has illustrated the potential of this program to bring staff closer together and to engender a deeper insight into our own understanding and perspectives.

Sally provides a wonderful example of a young educational leader who has been encouraged to showcase her talents through a variety of



Dr Helen McDonald, Head of Curriculum at St Catherine's School, with VCE Coordinator and Humanities Teacher, Miss Sally Wilkinson

“In our schools, women hold significant leadership positions which means that young girls and young teachers are able to benefit from an environment where that is the norm.”

means. A masterful teacher, Sally's practice in the classroom demonstrates the empathy, understanding and efficiency required of a future leader. Her recent appointment as VCE Coordinator has allowed her to translate these skills into a fresh context, which requires excellent administrative and personal qualities. Another goal for Sally, which will further enhance her leadership portfolio, is the completion of a Master's Degree in Educational Management. To support Sally in the process, the School nominated her for the 2013 W E McPherson Fellowship, which is promoted by the Invergowrie Foundation. Sally's selection

will provide her with wonderful financial support for her goal, as well as providing a network and audience for her research and project development on the financial literacy of girls.

Sally provides a great case study for the development of a future leader. However, it is clear that, although a school can provide an ideal climate for a new leader to develop and grow, only the individual can take the initiative to maximise their opportunities. Sally is also on the Board of Directors at the Victorian Commercial Teachers Association (VCTA) and regularly presents at professional development sessions run by the VCTA. She has certainly been encouraged by St Catherine's School in her goals and endeavours, but Sally alone has done the hard work that has led to her successful role in leadership.

When I asked Sally about her own journey towards leadership, she recalled being a new teacher with only four months' experience and being tapped on the shoulder for a leadership role. Her immediate reaction was to feel that she wasn't ready, but a wise young female mentor said to her, "Sometimes you don't know when you're ready but you have to have faith in your abilities and take that chance".

It is so important for us to let young teachers know when we recognise a talent within them. When they realise we have faith in them, they learn to have faith in themselves, and that is where the journey towards great leadership begins.

Developing tomorrow's leaders today

Kate Broadley, Alliance Researcher

In the last week of May the Alliance ran a Leadership Development Conference for middle managers in member schools. This inaugural event was supported by two Alliance partners: Bond University who hosted the conference and CIRCLE who facilitated a series of workshops. Fifty-five delegates from member schools across Australia participated, including a wide range of school staff. Department heads, teachers, coordinators, assistant principals, pastoral staff, and community relations officers represented a diversity of fields from science, maths, arts, history, sport and languages.

The breadth of gatherings over the two days ranged from chats over cake and coffee to group sessions and formal speakers. Delegates heard moving personal stories from Leann Wilson, the indigenous General Manager of Regional Economic Solutions. Tim Brailsford, Vice-Chancellor of Bond University and Catherine O'Sullivan Pro Vice-Chancellor, also inspired audiences with their leadership accounts. A host of Bond University staff were present throughout the conference to assist delegates and facilitate further discussion. Conference guests also enjoyed the Corrigan Art Tour of post-

2000 indigenous art, which is one of the largest indigenous art collections in Australia.

Four sessions were facilitated by CIRCLE under the broad headings of Vision, Influence and Change. Dr Phil Cummins and Marcus Edwards set the context for school leadership and strategy at the opening session before Dr Selina Samuels broke delegates into groups and presented each one with a mock school scenario. Delegate groups worked through a series of four 'school terms': developing and presenting the school vision, organising a leadership retreat, creating a signature school program and finalising details for a school celebration. This group work allowed for much discussion, crafting of ideas and laughter. Working through each scenario sharply focused the issues and concepts surrounding vision, influence and change in leadership. Theoretical curve balls were

thrown at the delegates – 'half way through the term, an important figure in the school dies' – and each group banded together to come up with practical solutions and outcomes for 'their' school.

"The theme of the conference, 'Developing tomorrow's leaders today', was most certainly explored, stretched, challenged and nurtured in each of the delegates who attended."



CIRCLE is an executive agency in education that builds cultures of excellence in learning and leadership. As an official partner of the Alliance of Girls' Schools, **CIRCLE** is committed to helping you achieve better outcomes for the girls in your school. To find out how **CIRCLE** can be of service to you, visit our website at www.circle.org.au

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The theme of the conference, *Developing tomorrow's leaders today*, was most certainly explored, stretched, challenged and nurtured in each of the delegates who attended. The Alliance will offer this conference in future years.

With the overwhelming positive feedback from delegates and the generosity of our partners, we hope that members will respond as eagerly and register early so they do not miss out on the opportunity to grow their leadership capacity and potential.



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Rosie Viner - BOND UNIVERSITY AND ST HILDA'S ANGLICAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS GRADUATE



NSW BRANCH

The power of networking

Julie Reynolds, Deputy Headmistress and Head of Senior School, Abbotsleigh

Our recent Alliance NSW branch dinner brought the power of networking to life.

What does it mean to network? How can networking enable our girls to develop in their leadership and skills? How can we better share ideas and opportunities amongst our communities of young women?

Emma Isaacs, Chief Executive of Business Chicks, spoke at the NSW Alliance dinner held at Abbotsleigh on Tuesday 13 August and challenged our perceptions of what networking means. She noted that many think that networking is an activity designed to see what you can get from others. In many circles this may be the case. Isaac's own experience as an entrepreneur shows a very different reality. She shows that the most powerful networking is altruistic, and that generosity brings success – in her words: 'givers get'.

As educators of young women we can learn a lot from Isaac's successful career and over dinner we were privileged to hear her story. She spoke of her first business venture at the tender age of seven which involved chocolates, friends and parents; she also spoke of the many opportunities her school experience gave her. Post school she was studying for a business degree, when she serendipitously landed an opportunity in a recruitment company which allowed her to take risks, develop her leadership, learn from mentors and finally embark upon the Business Chicks venture. Isaacs bought the Business Chicks business at the age of 25 with a membership of 250. Ten years later she now oversees an organisation that has 30,000 members and has national and international interests.

What is her advice to our young women? In regards to leadership she stressed the willingness to take risks as the mark of an effective leader. This will necessarily mean that failures can be part of the journey. She believes that to understand success you need to know failure. "You can't learn



L-R: Judith Poole, Alliance President and Principal of Abbotsleigh, Emma Isaacs and Maryanne Davis, Principal of Danebank.

if life is easy". This is an important observation for us as educators. Our educational communities are often risk averse and our parents will not always respond with enthusiasm if their girls 'fail'. We need to ensure our schools educate our young leaders to be bold in taking risks, learn to deal with failure and work for success.

What about success? Isaacs argued that resilience is an important ingredient to successful leadership and is essentially a learned behaviour. Her own story is a great example of this. "Being an entrepreneur is like being a punching bag", she said. She describes a moment when she shared a significant business success with her family only to be asked, "But when will you finish your business degree?" This is a reminder to us of the need to educate our girls and their families about the varied nature of success and the ways in which individuals can create very different life stories that are successful.

The third theme of the evening was the importance of networks and the way that support layers can enhance the leadership of women. Isaac's business is built upon this premise, but we can also do more to ensure that we encourage our girls to embrace the power of networking. Bringing this to action Gemma McDermott, the Dean of Pastoral Care at Loreto Normanhurst, took the opportunity to launch a new venture. She has a vision for helping our girls to network, sharing ideas, speakers, connections and opportunities, and invites all of us to join in. She invites members of Alliance schools to encourage student networking and invites others in NSW to join a task force to explore ways to build authentic connections.

It was a terrific dinner with networking in full flight. I encourage members to take the opportunity to make professional connections and to promote the power of networks for our girls.

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Serving up science for breakfast

On Thursday 15 August, the Alliance of Girls' Schools, Victorian Branch, partnered with Mentone Girls' Grammar School for their annual Science Breakfast. Mentone Girls' Grammar has hosted the Science Breakfast for local schools for the last three years and the partnership with the Alliance was designed to give greater access to an expanded network of girls eager to be inspired by women in science. The event has been growing each year, and this year, through the Alliance, achieved record numbers of attendees.

Welcoming over 190 students, teachers and accomplished female scientists, the Science Breakfast joined students with women who represent many different branches of science to discuss the impact, study pathways, and career opportunities that exist within the scientific arena.

We were extremely privileged to hear from guest speaker, Professor Elisabetta Barberio, who shared her knowledge and expertise in physics. Professor Barberio has been a member of the Experimental Particle Physics Group at the University of Melbourne since 2004. Previously she was a staff researcher at CERN, the European Laboratory of Particle Physics, where she played a crucial role in data analysis in the OPAL experiment at the Large Electron Positron Collider. She is currently participating in the eATLAS experiment and her group had an important role in the discovery of the Higgs boson-like particle at the Large Hadron Collider.

Students from 15 schools enjoyed hearing Professor Barberio, meeting girls from other Alliance schools, participating in a fun 'scientific' competition and eating a delicious breakfast – it was a great way to start the day!

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

In May, Ros Curtis, Principal of St Margaret's School, hosted a Queensland Alliance Branch cocktail event. Karen Spiller (below left), Principal of St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, presented the findings from her Churchill Fellowship research which examined strategies for preparing female leaders for the role of Principalship in Australian Schools to about forty staff from Queensland schools.

BELOW RIGHT: Some of the audience at the Queensland Networking Event





Professor Elisabetta Barberio (front left) with participants at the Science Breakfast

As the numbers of girls participating in science is falling worldwide, the Victorian Branch is supporting initiatives that positively influence young women and create a culture of excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) studies. We would like to express our thanks to the Head of Science at Mentone Girls' Grammar School, Mrs Helen Silvester and her Science Faculty team, to the Alliance schools that supported this event and to over 50 scientists who shared their wisdom with girls who will be the next generation of women in science.



L-R: Mrs Fran Reddan (Principal, Mentone Girls' Grammar School), Mrs Helen Silvester (Head of Science), Professor Elisabetta Barberio, Mentone Girls' Grammar students, Maya and Elizabeth

Ros Curtis welcoming guests



'Up close and personal' with inspiring leaders

Fran Reddan, Principal, Mentone Girls' Grammar School

The inaugural Victorian Branch dinner, *Up Close and Personal*, was a great success. Through the Alliance's new partnership with Bond University, the Victorian Branch continues its efforts to add value to members through high quality, tailored events to support leaders in girls' schools. Hosted by Fran Reddan (Principal, Mentone Girls' Grammar School) and Dr Mary Cannon (Principal, Canterbury Girls' Secondary College), the dinner was designed to provide a personalised environment where participants could hear inspirational stories, ask questions and learn more about what it takes to guide girls and women to consider leadership roles.

In the elegant surroundings of the Yarra room at the Melbourne Town Hall, approximately sixty guests from Alliance schools and Bond University representatives - Principals, teachers, academics and others with a passion for girls' education - joined together to meet two highly respected and accomplished women, Dr Helen Nugent AO, Chancellor, Bond University and Ms Leann Wilson, General Manager, Economic Regional Solutions. From a seat in the corporate boardroom to steering government's Indigenous engagement and inclusion policies, each woman has pioneered successful careers and redefined leadership in this country in their own unique ways.

Ms Leann Wilson is General Manager with the newly formed Regional Economic Solutions (RES). She has fostered understanding and collaboration across cultures, and across various levels of government and the corporate sector. A descendant of the Bidjara and Kara-Kara Peoples with historical association to Iningai country in Central and Central Western Queensland, Leann also has South Sea Islander heritage. She has held a variety of leadership positions and has been acknowledged for her leadership in several forums, including being a finalist in the *Telstra Business Woman of the Year* and a recipient of a Queensland Centenary medal. Leann regaled us with stories about her family ritual of baking sponge cakes and the key concepts of "respect, responsibility, relationships and reality" that continue to influence her decisions today.

The keynote speaker, Dr Helen Nugent AO, is currently a non-executive Director of Macquarie Bank, Origin Energy and Freehills, as well as Chairman of Funds SA. She is also President of Cranbrook School and Chairman of the National Portrait Gallery. In 2004, Dr Nugent was awarded Officer in the Order of Australia (AO) for services to business, particularly banking, in



Chancellor of Bond University, Helen Nugent AO, and Leann Wilson



Leann Wilson, General Manager, Regional Economic Solutions

the areas of corporate governance, the arts and the community.

Prior to her prominent career as a Company Director before 1999, Dr Nugent was Director of Strategy at Westpac Banking Corporation and a Partner at McKinsey & Company. Her academic credentials include a Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Queensland. In 1982, she achieved a Master of Business Administration with Distinction from the Harvard Business School. Helen has also held a number of academic posts throughout her career.

Dr Nugent inspired and encouraged us to be "bold, to own our outcomes, to never give up, and to develop talent". She reminded us to focus our energies in areas which we love deeply, noting that passion can energise people to move mountains. Perseverance is about more than "just turning up", it is about giving your all. She acknowledged the important work that educators in girls' schools do to develop girls' leadership, describing it as a "sacred task", and elaborating on advice we can give to girls to set them on a productive leadership path.

We were certainly stimulated and inspired by these successful women leaders with insights into leadership and career success that can be shared and applied within the school community and classroom. The evening was a great success, thanks to the strong partnership with Bond University, and the support of enthusiastic colleagues from all sectors of our membership - Independent, Catholic and Government. We look forward to many more opportunities for enjoying friendship, enhancing learning and sharing the excitement about the opportunities provided for girls in girls' schools and those who work with them.



Register now for the STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2014

awaken



The Alliance organises a Student Leadership Conference which is held each January for student leaders from member schools. The conference provides a forum to explore leadership, prepare for the responsibility of their roles in their schools and network with like-minded students. This year we welcomed 160 girls from across Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Philippines, Singapore, and from our affiliates in the United States to The Women's College, University of Sydney. Rising Generations facilitated the activities. It is extremely popular every year with girls claiming it has been a 'life-changing experience'.

School Registrations close Friday 27 September 2013 and payment must be received by that date for your girls to secure a place.

When? 15-19 January 2014

Where? Bond University on the Gold Coast, Queensland

Who? 2014 student leaders from Alliance Member Schools

Cost? \$760 per student. This includes all accommodation at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort, all meals, transport between the Resort and Bond University and facilitation by Rising Generations.

We are also proud to be able to offer scholarships for indigenous students who may not otherwise be able to attend, thanks to the generosity of our partners, World Challenge, CIRCLE and Bond University.

Check out the FAQs on the website for more information and to register!

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