Stay connected with the Avila Community and see what is happening on campus and with our Alumnae by following Avila College on Facebook and Twitter.

Want to organise, attend or enquire about a reunion? marketing@avilacollege.vic.edu.au or call 9831 9600.

We would love to hear from you! Send news, photos and updates to marketing@avilacollege.vic.edu.au

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Message from the Principal

In thinking about the Avila theme for 2016, ‘Its up to us’, I took inspiration from two significant individuals.

First, Pope Francis, who in this Year of Mercy has presented us with many thought provoking quotes, including one that really links well to what we have witnessed among our Avila College community throughout 2016; ‘Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up’ (Pope Francis).

His message consistently infers that it is up to them to be responsible for a world where peace is common to all.

The second significant individual is Sr Patricia Carroll, pvbm, our very first principal of Avila College.

When I visited her earlier this year and shared the successes of our Golden Jubilee year last year she reminded me that it is up to us all to make Avila great in the next fifty years.

Both Pope Francis and Sr Patricia are two individuals who really inspire us all to take on board this challenge that it is up to us and to use this as our drive and motivation to make a difference in not just our college community but also in the world to which we belong.

This year I have marvelled at the ‘voice’ of our students in their engagement and commitment to all that is on offer to them.

They have opened their hearts, have not squandered opportunities to be involved nor lost sight of the end result – whatever that may be for each individual.

Our students, with the generous support of our committed staff, have embraced this idea that it is up to them.

Louise Gunther
Principal

‘Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up’

Pope Francis
Chair of the Board

As she traversed the dimly lit and dangerous streets of Cork in the mid-1700s, the lantern of Presentation Sisters founder Nano Nagle offered dignity, education and opportunity to Ireland’s poorest children.

In 2016 the light of Nano’s lantern still shines brilliantly, now shaping the lives of Avila students through an education that inspires both hearts and minds.

An extensive curriculum provides opportunity to develop unique potential and Avila students are supported to discern their particular pathway, with VCE, VET and VCAL offered in the senior years. In relation to VCE results, in 2015 Avila College was placed ninth of all Catholic secondary schools in Victoria. An outstanding achievement! The commitment of all Avila staff to their roles and responsibilities contributes to the life of the College community and encourages, challenges and inspires our students.

With compassionate hearts willing to serve, Avila students are invited to cultivate healthy, compassionate relationships with each other and the broader community.

Students have again participated in year-level reflection days and regular guest speakers at pastoral gatherings have helped them to develop understanding, compassion and desire to assist those with less opportunity.

In 2016 some practical student responses have included Year 10 Community Service, Santa Teresa Immersion, Red Cross Appeal, Project Compassion and supporting the work of the Avila Reconciliation Group and the SVDP Young Vinnies Group.

The Avila College Leadership Team lead by example, inviting leadership and participation in the Avila community from staff, students and parents. Avila staff are now participating in Professional Learning Communities, sharing collaboratively with colleagues.

In August, Avila College hosted the NEAA (Nagle Education Alliance of Australia) Student Leadership Conference. This year, parents and Avila College Board representatives have attended whole-school assemblies to catch a glimpse of everyday life at Avila, and share in the celebration of student achievement and participation.

Avila student and staff contributions and talents have again been publicly celebrated through the Creative Arts Festival, the Avila/Mazenod Musical (Hairspray), Avila Music Festival, Sports Awards Night, Art Exhibition and the Year 10 Drama Festival. The PFA’s outstanding support has continued with events including Open Mornings and the Mother’s Day and Father’s Day Breakfasts.

With Ministerial Order 870 and the introduction of the new Child Safe Standards by the Victorian Government, the Board is assisting with Avila College’s priority to implement the seven Child Safe Standards, and has published a Statement of Commitment to Child Safety on the College’s website.

Their education inspires Avila students to embrace an ‘It’s up to us’ approach to life and to carry Nano Nagle’s lantern, shining opportunity, hope and justice into the world. As members of the Avila community, we are challenged to do the same.

Sally-Anne Petrie
Chair
Day in the Life of an Avila Girl

Year 10 Studio Arts students have captured and curated three images that portray a day in their life at Avila.
You’re the Voice...

The NEAA Presentation Schools Student Leadership Conference is a biennial Conference open to Year 10 students in all NEAA schools in Australia. Avila College proudly hosted the 2016 Student Conference in our Gathering Space in August.

Ninety students and accompanying teachers from all over Australia attended the 2016 NEAA Presentation Schools Leadership Conference.

This year’s theme “You’re the Voice...” encompassed the rich charism of the Presentation Sisters and work of Nano Nagle.

During the two day conference, delegates were involved in a number of activities and excursions designed to engage students with other young people from NEAA schools.

Together they discussed social justice issues, shared their passion for leadership and learnt more about the Presentation Charism and Nano Nagle.

The inspiring keynote address enthralled all in attendance and was delivered by Avila Alumnae (Class of 1985) The Honourable Justice Sharon Johns.

The dynamic two day program included a Eucharist conducted by Fr. Christian Fini OMI, a reflective mindfulness session and a Slam Poetry workshop with Emilie Zoe Baker where students used their voices to craft poetic ways to take Nano Nagle’s messages back to their schools. All the delegates also engaged in an act of service by gathering and preparing care packs for the Wellsprings for Women Centre.

Thank you to all our student leaders and staff for a thought provoking and welcoming event.

Christine Kralj
Deputy Principal, Wellbeing
Embracing New Perspectives

Santa Teresa 2016 is an immersion experience to Central Australia for Year 10 Avila students interested in exploring new perspectives and willing to open themselves to the rich and historic Aboriginal culture.

We embarked on our journey in Alice Springs, where we spent three days visiting various locations in the red centre.

Some of the highlights included Simpsons Gap, where it was so overwhelmingly quiet and reflective, the Akeyulerre Healing Centre, where we helped make traditional healing remedies, and the Desert Mob Marketplace, filled with the most amazing art and artists.

Former Avila student, Miranda Koroknai, joined us for our journey down to Santa Teresa. All of us agree that this was the best part of the trip as we got to help out in the school, the Women’s Centre and the Spirituality Centre. We even got to hang out with the local kids and attend Masses with the community.

To see the immense difference in living and health conditions was such an eye opener, and to feel we were helping the community made it all worth it.

On our last day, we took part in a smoking ceremony and that evening, spent the night out bush with Sister Liz and Brother Paul, reflecting on our journey. We then slept under the stars in swags and explored parts of Kata Tjuta and Uluru together.

Together we flew home with changed outlooks on the Indigenous Community and memories for years to come.

Emma Deegan, Danielle Apidopoulos, Tiana Chandraratne, Caterina Abell, Ellie Kleins, Olivia Bruce, Carly King, Millie Harris, Janine Bauman and Donna Teekens
According to Maths and I.T. teacher Mr Ziad Baroudi, STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths] education at secondary school provides students with critical skills and the ability to leverage a broad range of options across diverse sectors and areas of study.

“If you want to do genetics research for example” he explains, “you need a sound knowledge of statistics and computer programming. They are the tools that will help you analyse the data you collect in your laboratory experiments”. Interestingly, Mr Baroudi emphasises that STEM skills are not just relevant for pathways into traditional science streams but are far more broad ranging; “Imagine that you want to bring about social change”, he says, “then consider how great it would be if you could develop a website and keep a database of your supporters”.

In today’s digital age, Mr Baroudi believes that “STEM is relevant to everyone” but “we need to make a greater effort to expose girls to some facets of STEM, especially engineering and technology”.

Ready, Tech, Go!

The only girls’ school to have graduated a class of VCE Algorithmics (a university-level VCE subject in computer science), Avila College encourages STEM education through a combination of classroom and co-curricular options.

Check out and download mobile apps developed by Avila girls!

LOCKSPIN
How many seconds does it take you? This app trains you to open a combination lock.

FRENCH IN 50
Test your vocabulary with this interactive learning application.
Digital Disruption

The Young Inventors are exposed to different technologies as they build electronic circuits and learn how to program micro controllers. Avila Young Inventors have designed an electronic buzzer system (for competitions) and a security camera controlled by a wireless robot.

The App Group have learnt how to design and launch mobile applications and even launched their own app games. Students interested in computer programming can join the NCSS Challenge and many Avila students participate in the selective National Computer Science School.

Maths Counts

Avila students can exercise their cognitive muscles in the Maths Olympiad program where they train and 'compete' to solve time trialled maths challenges.

The Maths Talent Quest encourages students to explore and investigate the daily application of maths through the design and submission of a research project. Avila students also enter the AMT Australian Maths Competition, which helps develop their calculation and problem solving skills.

Experiment with Science

Avila’s Science Week showcases a range of interactive and fun science experiences with a scavenger hunt, robotics and hotly contested periodic table challenge.

Avila students get hands-on in Swinburne University’s BrainSTEM program, the National Youth Science Forum and have won a number of awards in the Victorian Science Talent Search.

Avila also supports students to participate in the national ICAS Science Competition which encourages analytical and problem solving skills.

An Engineered Approach

Run by the Melbourne University School of Engineering, The Amazing Spaghetti Machine Contest encourages Year 10 students to design and construct a “Rube Goldberg machine” – an overly complex device that performs a relatively simple task. Utilising a range of materials, students build the cause and effect machine to demonstrate multiple energy transformations.

The Robogals workshop series introduces students from Year 8 to 11 to engineering, programming and robotics. Working together with volunteers from Melbourne and Monash University, girls build and program robots using the LEGO Mindstorm NXT kits.
Behind the Seams

With an emphasis on skill development, fit and materials, Year 9 Design and Technology students have been busy creating their own fashion piece.

Studying Garment Construction, students manage a tight timeline and get involved in all aspects of production, from design to swing tags. Throughout the process, they have learnt about measurement, establishing good fit, and the importance of suitable materials.
Passionate about great design, aesthetics and the creative arts, Visual Communications Teacher Mrs Anne Graham is continuously inspired by the quality of work and creativity demonstrated by Avila students, both past and present.

“I just love it” exclaims Anne when talking about the work her students create, “especially when you share some tips and tricks and all of a sudden it just leaps off the page and the student realises that they can create something special”.

“To see that joy just makes my day,” says Anne, a teacher who thrives on supporting her students to develop their confidence and eye for design.

Originally trained as a textile and craft teacher, Anne recognised the growing demand for Visual Communications in the 1990’s and helped introduce it as a VCE subject to Avila, though classes and tools were very different at the time.

“Back then we only worked with set squares and rulers,” Anne reflects “and there were only two computers in the art room”.

Today Avila’s ‘VisCom’ classes are run in a computer studio furnished with the latest software, so students learn the techniques, tools and conventions used at university and within industry. As a result the quality of work produced is “so professional” says Anne.

“We study three major design fields - communication, industrial and environmental” she explains “so students cover everything from product and packaging through to architecture and outdoor structures”.

To help students stay ahead of a rapidly evolving field Anne keeps in touch with the latest design trends online and always visits the annual Top Designs exhibition at the Melbourne Museum; “I look at every exhibit and give students a shortlist of the best features to study, so they can identify the ‘wow factor’, learn how to annotate and see how to strengthen their folio”.

Anne loves to see how students’ work evolves in and beyond the classroom. “We have a number of former students that now have their own visual communications companies” she says proudly, “and that is the ultimate for me”.

An Eye for Design
The Streets are Talking

Avila College’s Year 10 Drama Festival is an annual event that showcases a number of passionate students in Years 7 to 10. Each year, the festival of student plays focuses on a single theme. In 2016, our theme was “The Streets Are Talking”, inspired by the works of anonymous street artist Banksy.

Beginning as a house drama festival in 1993, the Year 10 Drama Festival today is a blend of curricular and co-curricular material developed by the students.

Year 10 Drama students write the plays, cast students from Years 7 to 10 by running their own auditions, facilitate after school rehearsals for a three-month lead-up period, direct their actors, and stage their shows with multimedia, costumes and props.

The beauty of the Year 10 Drama Festival is that the students involved truly own the plays they have developed, rehearsed and performed before staff, parents, family, friends and other members of the Avila College community.

Our new Drama teacher, Ms Caroline Kelly, coordinated this year’s Festival with the assistance of Year 10 Drama Captain, Sophia Grubnic.

The students performed at the College before two very appreciative sell-out audiences.

Mr Justin Cash
Drama Co-ordinator
Festive Food Safari

Year 9 Avila students learn culinary techniques from around the globe in the Food Safari elective. Their German gingerbread recipe is perfect for the festive season.

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 60g butter
- 550g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- pinch salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbs cocoa powder
- 1 egg, beaten

Method

- Preheat oven at 190.
- Melt butter in saucepan, add sugar and honey.
- Stir over a low heat until the sugar dissolves. Allow to cool.
- Sift the dry ingredients.
- Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients, add the melted sugar mixture and egg. Mix into a smooth dough.
- Roll out dough and cut pieces for houses or create shapes.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes. Remove from oven, place on a cooling rack after 2 minutes.

Decorate with Royal Icing

Sift 4-5 cups of icing sugar. Beat 2 egg whites to a soft peak. Add sifted icing sugar, beating well until the mixture is firm. Decorate with candy, sprinkles and creativity!
Parents and Friends of Avila

PFA Committee member Kathy Pitt recently articulated the Parents and Friends Association beautifully at the Year 7 Parent Transition Evening. In Kathy’s words, the Avila PFA “is all about friend-raising not fundraising”.

Beautifully stated, it summed up the essence of what we do in the PFA; a group of parents who want to be actively involved in the lives of our daughters and build connections within the school community.

As parents of teenagers, we often find that the chance to meet other parents is diminished somewhat by their age and the age of the mobile phone.

The PFA offers a chance to meet others and be a part of the very special culture within the extended Avila community.

Thank you to all our committed Committee members who have contributed their time and energy to run events such as the World Teachers Day Lunch and the Fathers Day Breakfast.

PFA members have also attended Avila Open Morning Tours and the Year 7 Transition program.

It has been incredibly rewarding to give back and contribute to the community supporting our daughters and inspired a wonderful team culture within the PFA.

We are looking forward to the next twelve months and, as always, welcoming new parents and friends.

Wasana Fernando
PFA President
Alumnae Profiles

Dr Marissa Caldow
Graduating Year: 2000
Favourite Subject: Chemistry
Favourite teacher: Mr Cornell
Occupation: Biomedical Scientist investigating therapies for skeletal muscle loss
Career highlight: Being told by postmenopausal women that I had changed their lives when they participated in a clinical study I co-ordinated at Deakin University.
Lives in: Carnegie
Family: Rick and Ivy (6months)
Hobbies: socialising with friends and family, travel, food and wine
Fondest Avila memory: Times spent with my friendship group and preparing for Yr 12 Speech Night. The friendships built at Avila are still some of my closest friends.
Best advice to younger self: You need to get over your fear of public speaking by actually doing it! Don’t pick university subjects based on the fact you won’t have to give an oral presentation.

Veronica Caven Aldous
Graduating Year: 1974
Favourite Subject: English and Art
Favourite teacher: Pat Hall and Raymond Taylor
Occupation: Artist, renovator, builder and casual jobs, such as CRT.
Career highlight: Returning to study in my 50s, completing a MVA at VCA and PhD at Monash including a residency in London (Acme Studios)
Lives in: East Malvern
Family: Married to Richard for 25 years, son Guy (24), stepsons Will and Tom, 3 daughter inlaws and 4 grandchildren
Hobbies: Viewing art, travel, and hanging out with family and friends
Fondest Avila memory: Laughing with friends, being in the athletics team and Saturday art classes
Best advice to younger self: Be yourself.

Catherine Anning
Graduating Year: 1973
Favourite Subject: No favourite. I just tried my best at all of them.
Favourite teacher: Most of them but Annette Chammen worked with me to get from “F” in Form 2 to “A+” in Maths Form 3.
Occupation: MMBW, TABCORP Customer Sales
Career highlight: Working with a diverse range of age groups and learning from them.
Lives in: Endeavour Hills
Family: David (husband for 37 years), 4 daughters and 4 grandchildren
Hobbies: Ten-Pin Bowling, Reading Biographies, Sport.
Fondest Avila memory: Being a part of representative sport for the College.
Best advice to younger self: Make sure you have time management skills whether in the workplace or homelife. It worked a treat for me.
Daughter of an Avila alumnae, Medical student Georgia Harris (Class of 2011) attributes her focus on science to the infectious passion and enthusiasm of her Avila teacher, Ms McCaffrey.

**Lives in:** Coburg

**Favourite Subject at School:** Anything biology related!

**Favourite Teacher:** Ms McCaffrey

**Family:** Two sisters who both went to Avila (Stephanie and Paige - in year 12 next year), Mother Clare Harris who also went to Avila and father Stephen.

**Career Highlight:** Submitted an Honours research thesis studying the influence of stress hormones on seizures in epilepsy

**Hobbies:** Singing and writing music with my dad

**Fondest Avila Memory:** Going to Santa Teresa in Year 10 with Ms Gleeson, Ms KP and Ms Samson (who we all miss dearly)

**Advice to younger self**

Life exists beyond high school! It’s OK to make mistakes and to fail as long as you keep trying. Your successes taste sweeter when you’ve had to persist through hard times.

**What at Avila inspired you for tomorrow?**

Having good teachers can make or break someone’s desire to enter a particular field. I was fortunate enough to have Ms McCaffrey teach Genetics and Disease in Year 10, and her passion and energy for science was infectious.

It was following this subject that I decided I wanted to pursue a career in medicine, which combined my newly found love for science and my desire to work with people. I remember picking up extra practice VCE exams from Mrs Katsales that she had generously made available to me in her time off. It was this kind of ‘above and beyond’ attitude from the teachers that helped me reach my goals.

**What advice would you give to girls interested in STEM subjects?**

There is nothing more encouraging than working with other focused, intelligent women who want to study science. Surround yourself with people who challenge you. Strive to learn - not just for the sake of exams but for the sake of exciting new knowledge. Say yes to new opportunities. Discuss new ideas, read widely, ask questions. It is so easy to be inspired by science, and to inspire others.

**Have you kept in touch with your Avila network?**

My closest friend from Avila, Ashlea is studying paramedicine at ACU. We love discussing issues in healthcare and bouncing ideas off each other.
Based in Canberra, **Dr Naomi Mathers** (Class of 1987) is the Industry Liaison Engineer at the ANU Advanced Instrumentation and Technology Centre (AITC), Australia’s national space environmental test facility.

**Lives in:** Canberra at the Mount Stromlo Observatory. I have the best view in the city!

**Family:** I have an amazing 21 year old daughter

**What attracted you to space engineering?**

I have the Avila Careers Advisor to thank for getting me into Aerospace Engineering. She was the first person to ask me if I liked pure science or the application of science and introduced me to Engineering.

When we got to Aerospace I knew I’d found my thing. It’s right at the forefront of technology, multidisciplinary and a global industry.

**The most rewarding aspect of your career?**

I’ve really enjoyed showcasing Australian capability internationally and creating opportunities for Australians. I’m proud of the fact that I’ve contributed to the growth of the Australian Space Industry.

**What advice would you give to girls interested in engineering and science?**

Go for it! If you don’t try, you’ve already failed. Pick something you’re interested in and work hard. No matter what your career there will be hard work so it’s better to do something you’re passionate about.

**What are the things you enjoy doing most outside of work?**

I love travel, history and art. The great thing is that my job takes me all over the globe so I can combine all of my passions.

**What at Avila inspired you for tomorrow?**

I think my family, my circle of friends and my teachers all gave me a belief that there were no barriers to what I could take on. It was up to me to work hard, but there were no limits to what I could take on.

**Do you keep in touch with your Avila network?**

I made some amazing friends at Avila and I’m thankful that they are still an important part of my life. We all lead very busy lives, so we don’t get together very often but we stay in touch. These are special lifelong friends.
Achievements and Highlights

RUOK? Day
Avila College acknowledged RUOK? Day in September by transforming St Teresa’s garden into an interactive and inviting space. The set up included stalls from outreach organisations, activities run by staff and students and even a colourful balloon pit.

RUOK? Day encourages everyone to engage and connect with people and support one another.

The range of activities were carefully designed to prompt and invite conversations, remind everyone to take the time to ask “are you ok?” and listen to their responses.

Hairspray Musical
For over 25 years Mazenod and Avila College have enjoyed a proud tradition of collaboration to produce the annual school musical. This year’s performance of Broadway hit Hairspray received rave reviews - with many audience members clamouring for additional tickets to watch the show a second time.

Thank you to all involved, both on stage and behind the scenes. It was a professional production that showcased the talents of students and staff alike from both Avila and Mazenod College.

Italian Experience
This year’s visit to Monash University’s Prato campus was characterised by the fragrant smells of Italian cuisine, Tuscan fashion, historic architecture, ringing church bells and interaction with the welcoming locals.

Students refined their Italian, but it was not just the language they learnt. They learnt what life is really like for a young person living in Prato. Lessons were linked to life in the region and the cultural aspects of the course were linked to their own age group.

Avila girls also took part in cooking lessons, attended the theatre and visited the Textile Museum where they created their own garment to take home as a souvenir. The week concluded with a treasure hunt around the city and a celebration commemorating their week of learning.
Shared Stories Anthology

The annual ‘Shared Stories Anthology’ which forms part of the permanent collection of the State Library of Victoria features creative works from twenty two Victorian Catholic primary and secondary school students.

The concept is designed to challenge educators and students to explore positive and affirming ways of sharing experiences and ideas across cultural and social groups throughout Victoria.

This year’s theme for the anthology was “Connection and Renewal” and inspired creative contributions across a variety of mediums.

A number of Avila College students feature in the 572 page publication with Year 7 student Mimi Chang’s original piece receiving the 2016 Avila Anthology award.

Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholar

Year 10 student Kiran Kottakkal has been invited into the prestigious Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program.

Facilitated through Melbourne University, this academic enrichment program is designed to support high achieving secondary school students to get a head start on their university career.

It promotes leadership skills, team building and community involvement through an interactive workshop program and provides access to Melbourne University’s academics, library and specialist resources.

Kiran will have the opportunity to enjoy this and interact with other young scholars during her final two years of secondary school.

Annual Sports Awards

Avila College’s Annual Sports Awards Night recognises performance, leadership, sportsmanship and commitment on the field.

Hosted by Avila Sport Captains: Erin Flatters, Georgia Abbott, Jorjia Cotte, Abbey Goullet and Monique Louey, we were delighted to introduce Eleni Glouftsis, the first female AFL field umpire as the keynote speaker.

Eleni shared her inspirational story and the wonderful impact she has had in terms of raising the profile of women, not just in the sport of AFL, but in all sports.

Congratulations to all our Sports Awards recipients, and to Erin Flatters, who was recognised as Avila’s 2016 Sportswoman of the Year.