

Spotlight on Ivanhoe Grammar School Victoria, Australia

Ivanhoe Grammar School is a coeducational Anglican School for students from Early Learning to Year 12. It has had a long and proud history of providing service to those in need. The school is a member of the Round Square organisation, which is based on six ideals: internationalism, democracy, environment, adventure, leadership and service. A natural extension of the Round Square membership is providing students with opportunities to service others and obtain hands-on experience in living the Round Square ideals.

In 2002 Principal of Ivanhoe Grammar School, Mr Fraser, went on a fact finding mission to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as part of the school's commitment to its membership of Round Square. Following Mr Fraser's study tour, the school community chose to focus on Cambodia- a country still emerging from years of hardship and brutality. In 2004 the first Service Project took place. Since then, the Project has expanded from one senior student trip a year to multiple trips involving senior, middle years and primary students, parents and Alumni. In 2006 a new element of involvement in Cambodia was added- the International BACC Teacher Training Project. Primary teachers from Ivanhoe Grammar School's Buckley House campus are involved in training student teachers from the Kandal Province Teacher Training College in Phnom Penh.

The school's Service Project in Cambodia is the largest initiative of its kind undertaken by the school. Each of the four projects have a particular emphasis but all are designed to bring desperately needed resources, English skills and friendship to Cambodians. Before the departure of each Service Project, participants raise funds to contribute towards their particular venture. These Cambodian journeys not only benefit Cambodians but also have a profound and lasting impact on the Ivanhoe Grammar School student, staff and parents involved.

Mithran Vyrapillai's (2010 Student Service Project member) reflections sum up the sentiments of many participants. *'The Cambodian Service Tour was full of unforgettable moments and memories. We feel immensely thankful to the school for giving us this fantastic opportunity to help other people and*

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experience a fascinating new culture. Also, we feel indebted to the wonderful Cambodians who let us into their lives and showed us their perspective on life. It was truly a rewarding and fulfilling experience'.

The Cambodia Service Projects have become an integral part of Ivanhoe Grammar School's ethos. Mr Fraser says *'It has developed into a wonderful community commitment. In practical terms we do what we can do to help Cambodia, but the most significant factor is the experience gained by all those who go on these projects. Before long these young people may be in positions of influence, and having had this life-changing experience, I'm confident that benefits will accrue for many years to come'.*

Thank you to Helen Page-Wood, and the Cambodian Service Project Committee, Rod Fraser, Deb Sukarna, Mark Horsford and Andrew Fox for this article.

Shades 4 AIDS Day!

Join hundreds of schools and be part of the Shades 4 AIDS Day on **Friday 27th May 2011** to raise funds that will save children in Cambodia from a lifetime of HIV and AIDS.

For more info visit: www.shades4aids.org
or email info@shades4aids.org



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MLC Sydney Dream Centre Nepal

Towards the end of the last holidays, nine Year 10 students travelled to Nepal to experience a new and unfamiliar culture and its people and as a consequence to develop their own research project based on major issues facing Nepal today and how these issues may be resolved in the future, and of course to open the MLC Dream Centre.

Interviewing girls of their own age, they identified problems faced by the youth of Nepal and very specifically the issues facing young women in Nepal today. They participated in debates, one of which was, which was more important health or education.

Before we knew it, it was the last day of our trip. This is what we have come for – to open the MLC Dream Centre. On arrival we found a room with newly painted lilac walls and clean carpet. The windows are awaiting curtains – but there are lots of cushions to sit on. Overall there was a sense of freshness about it, a feeling of expectation, a place already filled with hopes and dreams for the first 20 girls to be offered a place here.

They have been selected from Years 6 and 7 and are mostly child domestic workers. As we walked into the room we were greeted by lots of smiling faces and excited chatter as the first group of girls sat waiting our arrival. Before the speeches began Brittany Sheahan sang a haunting beautiful song about dreams.

In beautifully spoken English two Nepali girls who had graduated from the other Dream Centre told us what it had meant to them to have had such an opportunity. But most moving was the mother, who spoke straight from her heart of what the opportunity had meant for her daughter and consequently for her and the rest of their family.

The proceedings concluded with the MLC girls talking about dreams.

Dreams are important because they allow you to make your life your own. They give life colour, meaning, depth momentum, and spiritual wealth.

- Shelley Jiang

At MLC we learn the importance of dreaming and the significance of realising our full potential and how we can create change in the wider community. That is why MLC believes that these dream centres are so important to the growth and development of young women in Nepal.

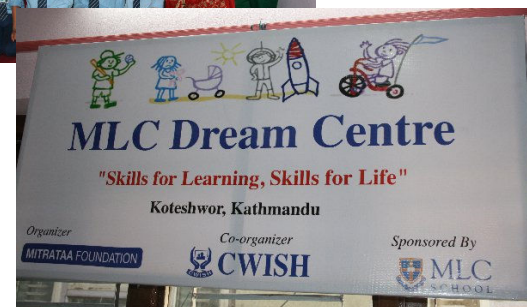
- Kate Sullivan

What we, at MLC hope to achieve through the establishment of this particular Dream Centre is to help girls realise that they are influential young women and CAN make a difference within not only the Nepalese community but the wider world as well. Where you live should not determine how you live and therefore, should not limit your dreams.

- Maree Raad

A fitting climax to the 12 days in Nepal in which the girls explored, discussed, embraced, researched and questioned. MLC School maintain an ongoing partnership with the Mitrataa Foundation. Dream Centres are a project of the Mitrataa Foundation, for more information please visit: www.mitrataa.org.

Thank you to Pamela Hatfield and Rosemary King of MLC School Sydney for this article.



Thinking of Mums this Mothers Day

Millennium Development Goal #5: Improve maternal health.
Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters by 2015.

- A woman in sub-Saharan Africa has a 1 in 16 chance of dying in pregnancy or childbirth, compared to a 1 in 4,000 risk in a developing country – the largest difference between poor and rich countries of any health indicator.
- Almost half of births in developing countries take place without a skilled birth attendant, 65% in South Asia.

Find out more at:

www.un.org/millenniumgoals/maternal.shtml



CAS story from GD Goenka World School, India

In order to support community health in our region, we organized free health check up camps over three days across three villages. This camp was organized by grade 11 students of GD Goenka World School (Gurgaon, South-West of New Delhi, India) under the guidance of CAS Coordinator, Mr .Gyanendra Tewatia, and in collaboration with Sanjeevani Hospital. It was an unforgettable three days experience. Here are some of the diary entries from students reflecting on their experiences.

Day 1: Dhunela Village

It was our first health camp and we faced many problems in interacting with the people from the village and also in starting our camp on time. Initially the camp was a bit chaotic but it ended on a positive note. We arranged for there to be free medicines for the villagers through Sanjeevani Hospital, who also sent doctors to do the check-up and treatments for the villagers free of charge. We divided our duties into different departments and as soon as the doctors arrived with their team we started with our respective tasks. We started lining up people for getting their check-ups done and we were providing people free medicines according to their prescriptions. It was a difficult task to manage the people but slowly and steadily the work became easier.

Day 2: Sehjawas Village

Our jobs were divided between us and we were confident enough to perform our tasks successfully as we already had an experience of it in our previous journey to the village. This time we were well organized and our camp started on time. Each student was given a different task so that we gain more experience. In this trip, suddenly an emergency took place in which a villager got very ill, so we had to send him to the Sanjeevani Hospital in an ambulance we arranged. He was treated properly in the hospital, and all of his treatment was made free by us. This time we were able to communicate with the people more easily and encourage them to get their health check-up done.

Day 3: Ghamdoj Village

A beautiful morning with the sun shining over our heads, we were ready to start our day's work at the village of Ghamdoj. This time we planned to cater for the maximum number of people possible, so the village we chose was big and we all prepared as we knew that today's trip was going to be the longest one. Half of us were handling the camp and half of us went campaigning in the village. We focused more on campaigning so that as many villagers could benefit from the free medical assistance as possible. We visited many houses, we were warmly welcomed by the villagers, we informed them about our camp and encouraged them to come. In this trip we catered around 200 people, which was a great success for us. Both the doctors and the villagers were pleased by the experience and we look forward to being able to do more medical trips in the future.

Thank you to Gyanendra Tewatia, CAS Coordinator, and students at GD Goenka World School India for this article.



Clickity-clack knitting is back at St Margaret's College NZ

When you think of knitting, you visualise little old ladies with their needles clacking away, a ball of wool at their side somehow unravelling and becoming a warm wearable object. Breaking the stereotype, last September a group of IB girls undertook the challenge of learning the intricacies of this art.

We certainly had good reason to! The idea came from Ms Allen to knit jumpers for children in Zambia who suffer through icy winters all too often without warm clothes to wear. The luxury of being able to bundle up whenever we feel like it is something that many of us take for granted, but for these impoverished children it is something that could make the difference between life and death. Giving up our spare time to learn knitting was a small sacrifice in comparison to the difference that we have hopefully made to their lives.

Learning to knit is not as terrible as you may first think. This was due to the wonderfully straightforward pattern that the jumpers followed. Once you get the hang of the motions needed to cast on and off, and 'work' stitches, the rest is a piece of cake. There is also something very calming and tranquil about simply letting your hands and needles work. At least, it's calming when you avoid making mistakes in your stitching! If you find yourself with some spare time, or even if you need something to do during TV ad breaks, then I highly recommend taking up knitting. You may find yourself with a hobby for life.

Thanks must go to The Main Skein for donating wool; without their help we couldn't have made these jumpers in the first place. Thanks also to Ms Copland, who guided us and showed us how to knit. Hopefully these Zambian children will much warmer in the coming winter.

Thank you to Megan Chu, Y13 Student at St Margaret's College for this article.

CAS in the Central Desert

Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College, NSW

Monte has been conducting a community service trip to Aboriginal communities of Central Desert since January 2008. Our commitment is to work under the advice and guidance of traditional owners from these communities and engage with service in ways they decide as appropriate. This programme also offers fulfilment of the each of our creativity, action and service requirements, as well as the opportunity to achieve many CAS outcomes. Working with Aboriginal community members involved us developing our awareness of global issues which Indigenous peoples across the world are facing, as well as developing awareness of ourselves in that context. The Indigenous communities of the Australian desert are faced with many inequalities in their health, life expectancy and education. The Central Desert experience not only allowed us to better understand this, but also to make an effort to do something about it.

Our small contingent of 15 students and 5 staff split into three groups to do activities to support the childcare centre and the Art Cooperative at Mutitjulu, and to do land care at Docker River. The childcare mob played with the kids and helped out in a variety of ways, including cleaning and starting a garden. We also had the objective to encourage the children to blow their noses, which may seem trivial however we learnt that children's blocked noses is a crucial issue in these communities and often has major implications for hearing loss.

The art mob was very busy at Maraku Arts. Here we had the opportunity to interact and learn from famous desert artists such as Billy and Lulu Cooley. We would sit around their campfire as they showed us how they made 'Walka Boards' by burning incredible patterns into planks of wood with a bent pieces of wire and then painting them in the traditional style and colours related to story. It was a new dimension in creativity for all of us as in the most spontaneous situations we witnessed beautiful works of art develop. This was certainly a process in working collaboratively. We also helped in the warehouse and the gallery sorting stock and creating displays.

The landcare mob travelled to another Indigenous community Kaltukatjara at Docker River, situated a few kilometres from the WA border. Here we combated the encroaching environmental issue of buffel grass which grows in clumps around trees and buildings and is a severe fire hazard in the climate of the Central Desert. It is an exotic species introduced for cattle. We worked in the school hacking these huge clumps out that were half a metre in the ground with all our might, blood and sweat.

After days of perseverance and commitment the school was transformed and cleared of buffel grass and replaced with young, beautiful native plants.

We discovered and learnt many new creative skills in terms of Aboriginal art, dance, song and bush tucker. These amazing aspects of their culture that Aboriginal people hold, but they were so generous in sharing this with our group. However, through this opportunity and the desire to share, we were privileged enough to participate in and gain these insight and understanding in a culture so Australian, but so different from our lives in Sydney.

Being in the desert overall was a great honour and it was wonderful to engage in service with the Indigenous communities. We have built on a growing program between these communities and our school which we hope to sustain into the future. We hope to reach a time where there will be less "them and us" but a more united people who share an understanding of each others' culture and increasingly engage in *Ngapartji Ngapartji* - two-way learning.

Thank you to Year 12 Monte students Eloise Liddy and Paige Chowdry for this article.

AIA Sydney's mobile assistance project



The Australian International Academy (AIA) Sydney Campus is working in partnership with Bankstown Council & Bankstown City Library to assist seniors citizens in the community.



The program provides opportunity to break down barriers between senior citizens and the youth and develop stronger links and relationships between them.

The program allows for students to assist the elderly with using technology, with the emphasis on mobile phones. Students spend one on one sessions with senior citizens teaching them how to use their mobile phones e.g. how to send and receive text messages, photos, emergency contact lists, calendar settings. The students are also on hand to answer any other technology concerns and queries raised.

The senior members in the program are overwhelmed with the student's support and look forward to ongoing partnerships with the school and students.

Thank you to Wassim Zoabi of AIA Sydney for this article.

Youth Volunteering

On Tuesday 19th April I attended a seminar organised by the Centre for Volunteering NSW on the topic of understanding youth volunteering. The seminar was hosted by Jacinthe Brosseau and David Fisher-Dobbin who manage the youth volunteering section of the Centre, and it was attended by representatives from a range of not-for-profit organisations who were seeking advice and discussion on how they can better assist and encourage young people to engage in meaningful volunteering.

First we outlined what some of the benefits for students were with regards to volunteering;

- Provides a confidence boost
- Learn new skills and experience new things
- Opportunity to contribute to something they believe in
- Chance to meet and connect with a range of different people
- Increases student's ability to cope in the world outside school and home

We then looked at what were some of the keys to successful youth volunteering activities;

- The experience needs to be enjoyable - usually this is through the people they are working with
- Linked to the responses the young volunteers receive from the people who are receiving their services i.e. an environment where they actually meet the people they are assisting and can receive immediate feedback
- Activities should focus on building connections with the community and student skills acquisition (work-related and/or personal/ social)
- Hands on tasks, learn by doing
- A variety of tasks
- Challenging but not too far out of the young person's skills set
- Learning to cope is part of the experience
- A positive atmosphere where the young person feels like they are valued
- Opportunity to contribute ideas and use initiative - organisations discussed the benefit of having young people contribute to their organisation by taking on a youth advisory role i.e. provide suggestions on how the organisation can tailor themselves to be more youth-friendly.
- Student's interests and skills matched to the organisation of project as much as possible

These are not hard and fast rules. As many of you have discovered there are occasions where a project has taken a student right out of their skills set and comfort zone but the experience has proven to be highly successful. This will largely depend on the student's personality and ability to cope with challenges.

Some barriers for youth volunteering;

- Complicated insurance issues
- Organisations not able to provide enough for the students to do
- Difficulty getting to & from place of volunteering and time available amongst school and other commitments

There are some strategies on overcoming these barriers on the Youth Services toolkit site which was developed by Communities NSW:

www.youthservicestoolkit.com.au

And you may also like to access the information and ideas available from the Centre for Volunteering's Youth site: www.youthvolunteering.com.au



Global Engage

You or your students can also post articles about school service projects on the IB's Global Engage site in the 'Action by the IB Community' section: <http://globalengage.ibo.org/eng/actions>



I hope you enjoyed this issue of Spotlight on Service and have picked up some great ideas for service in school.
Best regards, Stefanie Sandford, IBAP Australasia.