



Alumni | Community  
SPRING 2020

# HARVEST

## IN THIS EDITION

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40 Years of  
Thanksgiving

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NCC on the Farm -  
Raising students that  
care





## College Principal note

# Christian Education for the Common Good: NCC's 40-year journey (and counting)



Geoff van der Vliet | COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

In August 2020, a report released findings of six Australian school groups who joined in a research project to identify and quantify how Australian millennials (25 to 39-year-olds) contribute to the flourishing of Australian communities. The Cardus Education Survey Australia explored the extent to which contributions of different types of schools are evident many years after graduation, giving a snapshot of how schools help cultivate and engage with a range of social, civic, cultural, academic and spiritual outcomes.

NCC was represented in this survey as one of the identified groups (Christian Schools). Established in 1980 with a vision of providing a broad education, NCC embraces the moral and spiritual formation of a person as well as the more common intellectual, physical and economic purposes. By partnering with parents for this holistic preparation for life, NCC continues to strive to develop young people and adults who are firmly grounded in how to live well and enrich their neighbours and community.

In terms of life formation, NCC outworks a strong view that the proper emphasis is 'character first, and everything else follows'. Virtuous character incorporates learning excellence whereby teachers, parents and students work hard to pursue their personal best. Virtuous character also

has the paradoxical effect of enhancing the enjoyment and satisfaction (wholeness) of life through building relationships and community, serving as an antidote for the common emptiness of self-obsession in our time.

As G K Chesterton wrote prophetically, 'Meaninglessness does not come from being weary of pain. Meaninglessness comes from being weary of pleasure.'

Of the several areas in which Christian school graduates ranked highly in the Cardus survey was their belief that their school prepared them to find a sense of meaning, purpose and direction in life; and the emphasis on character formation. The bible gives a foundation for this framework; Jesus himself said that he came to give life to the full and he taught his followers to focus on sacrificial love, while Paul gave instructions about looking not only to your own interests but to the interests of others.

The stories in this Harvest Review are a tiny reflection of NCC's intention to help every student find meaning and purpose in their life, to grow in all areas for their completeness (shalom) and to contribute to the common good of our communities.

I hope you can find some reflections of your own journey in the stories that follow. 🌱

“If I had to summarise my NCC VET journey, I would say it is rewarding, supportive, and self-paced. Starting my journey on the last day of Year 9, I wanted to utilise all of my senior years to come out of school with not only a QCE, and ATAR but some solid applicable qualifications. However, I have come out with a lot more. I have learnt excellent skills, met awesome people, been continuously supported, and ironed out some possible future careers,” says Year 12 student Lachlan Walker.



## NCC education

# Providing students with skill-based education and training

NCC is a recognised training organisation offering a variety of qualifications to students contributing toward advanced diploma level. Vocational education and training courses are offered in Agriculture, Hospitality, Baking, Furnishings, Manufacturing, Sport and Recreation, as well as learning the foundation skills for work.

Over recent years, the VET sector has continuously proven its positive impact on student employment outcomes. It shows that VET provides courses for nine out of the ten occupations with the highest predicted growth over the next five years, according to a report released by Skilling Australia Foundation Key. Students can gain QCE points while learning the foundation skills for work, preparing for a career and gaining qualifications to help them enter their chosen industry.

Built on the grounds of an old pineapple farm, NCC has always had its roots in agriculture. Because of this, over time, the College farm and Agricultural Science program has grown to become one of the most respected on the Sunshine Coast. The most recent addition of certifications available to NCC is Rural Operations studied through The University of Queensland at Gatton. The students can do this course as a timetabled subject at NCC and have the opportunity to travel to the UQ campus at Gatton for practical training camps twice a year. The students access their VETiS funding for this qualification.

NCC's Hospitality Trade Training Centre provides students with incredibly real-life experiences working in a commercial kitchen, 100 seat restaurant with an additional alfresco dining area and a fully equipped non-alcoholic bar. NCC employs two chefs to provide quality training and experiences that assist students in gaining entry-level

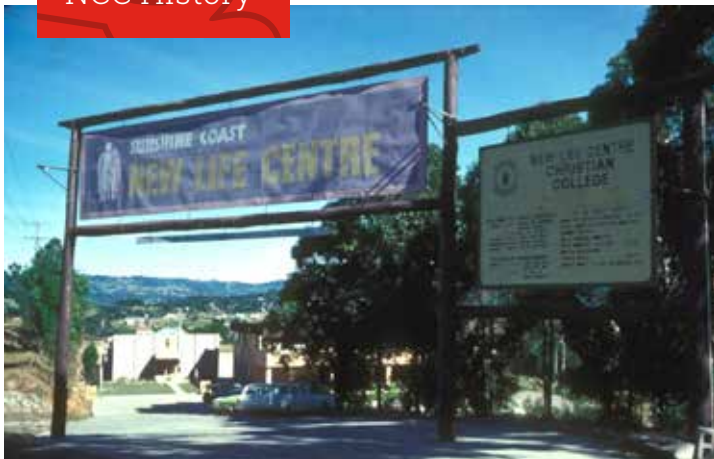
vocational education in a variety of industries - including hospitality, aged-care, hospitals, restaurants and cafes. NCC's two certificate III courses also contribute towards a student's ATAR.

NCC's Sport and Recreation qualification allows students to work in NCC's fully functioning, open-to-the-public gym, Shalom Fitness. Students also gain their first aid certificate and learn surfing and basic rescue skills at Maroochydore Beach.

The furnishing and manufacturing workshop at NCC is fitted out with all the tools and equipment to ensure students feel they are working in a cabinet making business. Students learn how to make dressing mirrors, chess boards, mantle clocks and a roll-top writing desk. The life skills that students develop can give them an advantage when heading out into the construction industry, specifically when it comes to inductions and basic workplace skills.

For any student heading down a vocational training pathway, learning the foundation skills for workforce entry is essential. NCC students develop written and oral communication skills, complete work experience in their chosen industry and learn how to answer questions in a simulated employment interview. Undertaking this certificate provides students with additional opportunities to meet the literacy and numeracy requirements for their QCE, while also enhancing their employability.

The future of Vocational Education and Training at NCC is looking bright with the investigation into potential qualifications in other areas, including health, community services, business, child care and many more industries.



## NCC in Celebration

# 40 years of Thanksgiving

NCC is a testament to what committed families can do to provide an outstanding education for the Sunshine Coast community.

Conceived in the late 1970s, Nambour Christian College's development has to date been signposted by the achievement of five visionary master plans.

Over the past 40 years, Nambour Christian College has built a fine reputation as a leader in Christian education on the Sunshine Coast – and as a school that develops young citizens that people can count on. To date we have educated over 5000 + young people.

Through our many academic, spiritual, cultural and sporting activities, we have seen outstanding results from groups as well as individual students at local, state and national level. The employability of our students and their future prospects continue to be strong.

Today we are seeing second generations of our families enrol in our school. It is a wonderful endorsement of the education these parents experienced and their faith in our school that they choose to send their children to Nambour Christian College.

As it was in the early days, Nambour Christian College continues to thrive due to the energy, passion, faith and commitment of our staff and our families. As we looked to the future, we were excited by the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead. As a College community, we will continue to seek the Lord, in prayer for his direction for our future.

Some of the key highlights of our College's development:

### MAJOR MILESTONES:

**1979:** Local families of the New Life Assembly of God Nambour church started planning for a Christian school on the Sunshine Coast.

**1980:** The New Life Christian school

commenced in the former church building with 36 students, from Years 2 to 11.

**1987:** Christian based curriculum was evolved. Mr Bruce Campbell appointed to new position of Deputy Principal. School attained government accreditation and Commonwealth and State funding.

**1988:** First service trip to Fiji for Year 12 students.

**1989:** 144 Primary and 107 Secondary Students in attendance. School Board established. End of a formal connection between founding church and school.

**1991:** 'Towards 2000' Master Plan accepted. First stage of a multi-stage building program commenced.

**1992:** School's name changed to Nambour Christian College to reflect the desire to be a non-denominational Christian school.

**1999:** College restructured to create a Middle School, comprising Years 7, 8 and 9 to accommodate the special needs of adolescents. Other sub-schools being: Primary School (Preschool to Year 6) and Senior School (Years 10, 11 and 12.)

**2001:** Enrolments exceeded 1000 students. NCC became one of the largest independent schools on the Sunshine Coast.

**2002:** Award-winning Lecture Theatre and the outdoor Amphitheatre opened.

**2003:** Service trip to Thailand commenced.

**2004:** Early Learning Centre and new Prep facility opened – also received design awards.

**2005:** Hospitality facility and new Berakah Farm buildings opened.

**2006:** Multiple classes in each level. School enrolment hit 1200 students. Significant expansion of the curriculum.

**2010:** Took on the Gulf Christian College, based in Normanton in northern Queensland, supporting the school with expertise and resources. Commenced service trips to Normanton with students in Year 10 and now Year 9.

**2011:** A new teaching framework based on best teaching Practice introduced, resulting in improved student outcomes. First trip to Malawi, enabling students and staff to provide missionary and practical aid.

**2012:** Abbenbroek building comprising of Junior library, science labs, music rehearsal and practice rooms and Health & Fitness centre including dance studio and gym opened. First trip to India.

**2014:** Purpose-designed Early Learning Centre opened. Sporting programs upgraded.

**2015:** Major technology upgrade and laptops introduced.

**2017:** Research program on the benefits of Classical Education approach.

**2018:** Introduction of French in Junior School and Philosophy in Senior School.

**2020:** Reformation of Teaching and Learning Framework for effective practices.

### THE FOUNDATION YEARS: 1980-1990

Preparations began in 1979 by local families to commence a Christian school on the Sunshine Coast.

This was the result of parents being concerned with the schooling options available and wanting to provide an education for their children that was based on Christian values and biblical principles.

In 1980 the school commenced with 36 students, from Years 2 to 11, with the curriculum being the Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.) program. The daily program saw mornings spent doing self-paced academic subjects while the afternoons were for music, drama, art, handicraft and sport.

The school was located in the former church building. It consisted of one large classroom,





a small library, two storerooms and one office and was known as New Life Christian School. The first multi-purpose building was constructed in 1985, consisting of two rooms, a science laboratory and a typing room.

In 1987 the decision was made to replace the A.C.E. program with a broader, Christian based curriculum. Mr Bruce Campbell, was appointed Deputy Principal. The school received government accreditation and Commonwealth and State funding at this time.

At the end of the first ten years, our emerging Sunshine Coast school consisted of 275 students (144 Primary and 107 Secondary).

## THE BUILDING YEARS: 1991-2000

The church Pastor saw the need for a more professional and planned approach to the oversight and development of the school, and in 1989, the School Board was established. It immediately set about creating a development plan for the future called 'Towards 2000'. This marked the end of the formal connection between the church and the school.

The first stage of a multi-stage building program was commenced and this comprised speciality rooms including a home economics kitchen and sewing rooms, science laboratories and a mathematics room. By late 1999 construction had begun on the new resource centre as well as the final stage of the administration building.

Bruce Campbell, previously Deputy Principal, was appointed Head of College at the end of 1991 and led the school through these building years. In 1992 the school's name was changed to Nambour Christian College.

In 1999 an important change took place in the structure of the College with the commencement of Middle School, comprising Years 7, 8 and 9. This major restructuring was made, in recognition of the special needs of early adolescents, by changing their traditional groupings and subject offerings.

Primary School then encompassed Preschool to Year 6, with Senior School comprising Years 10, 11 and 12.

## THE MATURING YEARS: 2001- 2010

As the College entered the 21st century,

enrolments had grown to almost 1000 students, and NCC was one of the largest independent schools on the Sunshine Coast.

Building did not cease, however, with the completion of the award-winning Lecture Theatre and the outdoor Amphitheatre in 2002; the Early Learning Centre and new Prep facility in 2004 (again winning an award for design and construction) and the Hospitality facility and new Berakah Farm buildings in 2005.

The first Prep class was introduced in 2004 with another added in 2005 and a third in 2006. By the commencement of 2006, the Primary School consisted of three classes in each year level – Prep through to Year 6.

Middle School had expanded to four classes in Year 7 and five classes in both Year 8 and 9. Senior School had grown to five classes in each year level – Years 10, 11 and 12. The College enrolment exceeded 1200 students.

The curriculum for all school levels continues to expand with the most notable development in Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), Hospitality, Agricultural Science and Music.

The introduction of the Year 5 (now Year 4) Instrumental Music program in 2002, involving all students in that year level, has significantly increased the number of students participating in instrumental music and has enriched College life with the expertise and diversity of the various bands, orchestras and ensembles.

## FULFILLING OUR MISSION: 2011-2014

We adopted the following Vision Statement that drove our Strategic Plan over the next four years.

NCC will be recognised globally as a leading Christian College where students are equipped for Life, Living and Discipleship.

A review of teaching and learning across the College, led to the development of a new framework, based on the latest research into best teaching practice that resulted in improved student outcomes. A Teaching and Learning Committee was established, supported by the Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Studies. Construction commenced in late 2013 of a purpose-designed Early Learning Centre to be built adjacent to the College on

the old Koala Motel site. This was opened in September 2014.

Sporting programs across the College were reviewed in light of the completion of the Health and Fitness Centre as well as changes to the SCISSA competitions for Middle and Senior School students.

Pushing the boundaries of our influence has seen the extension of both our Sister School and our Missions Project opportunities.

Since 2010 NCC has taken over the running of the small Gulf Christian College, based in Normanton in northern Queensland, supporting the school with both expertise and resources. Sister Schools were established with Thomas Hassall Anglican College (NSW) and Tyndale Christian School (SA). This relationship has opened the way for professional development opportunities between the staff of the three schools. In 2011, the College visited Malawi in Africa taking a team of students and staff to work with the students in a small village school and children's home.

## EMPOWERMENT AND INFLUENCE – LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: 2015-2021

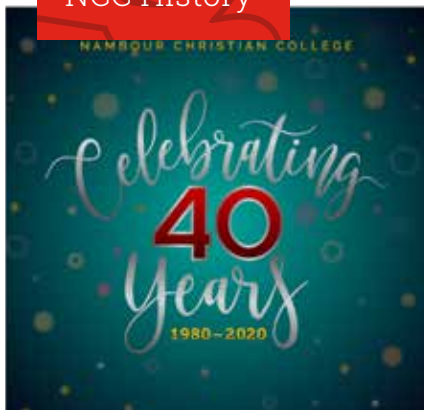
The strategic plan and vision for Nambour Christian College 2015-2021 established a framework to further develop our great school. Our vision to be a Christian School of first choice for parents living on the Sunshine Coast and hinterland would be enhanced by the implementation of this seven-year strategy.

'Empowerment and Influence' express the main theme that underlines our vision. We are committed to continuing to develop a robust, innovative learning environment that promotes personal best, the fulfilment of individual potential and academic excellence. At the same time, we will continue to explore and enhance our spheres of influence as we fulfil all that we believe God has called us to in our College.

During this time, a much stronger appreciation of the need for greater global connectivity, awareness and standards has arisen within the College in recognition of the opportunities and impacts in front of today's students.

continue...





## OUR PRINCIPALS

We are very grateful for the leadership and fellowship that has been provided by our Principals.

- Ps Paul Camac 1980-1981
- Mr Noel Shaw 1982 -1982
- Mr Lesley Smith 1983 – 1985
- Mr Allan May 1986 – 1991
- Mr Bruce Campbell 1987 – 2017
- Mr Geoff van der Vliet 2018 - Current



SHALOM Fitness is the name of the gym within the Nambour Christian College Health & Fitness Centre and is equipped with the latest and finest fitness equipment.

It has a broad selection of cardio

equipment, free weights, pin-loaded machines, a matted area for floor exercises and a grass oval for outdoor work. SHALOM Fitness is managed by fully qualified staff, and professional supervision and instruction are provided with memberships.

SHALOM offers the NCC Community:

- Personal Training
- Sporting excellence programs for students
- Group fitness classes
- Fitness testing
- Personalised gym programs
- Fitness challenges based around the school term
- Nutritional advice (by appointment only)

For more information, give Ange a call ph: 5451 3381 or email: [shalomfitness@ncc.qld.edu.au](mailto:shalomfitness@ncc.qld.edu.au)



## Class of 2013

# Meg Lucas

To say that NCC graduate Meg Lucas is ambitious would be an understatement. The 2013 alumnus was the first student to study seven electives, including French via distance education, on top of sitting for the highly-respected A.Mus.A Diploma for Violin in the very same year. Meg proudly exited the year with High Distinction for her music exam and a well-deserved offer to study Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Business (majoring in International Business) through the University of Waikato (UoW), New Zealand.

For the two years that Meg spent in New Zealand, she made use of every possible moment to enjoy the spectacular scenery and adventures that the Land of Long White Cloud had to offer, before transferring back to complete her studies through the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Currently working as a Law Graduate at a leading national firm, Gadens Lawyers, in the banking and finance team.

Meg lives and works full time in Brisbane as she works to complete the final phase of her legal studies with the College of Law.

Looking back on her time at NCC,



Meg fondly remembers the support of the school and her teachers, "All staff at NCC have such a vested interest in each and every student, I felt they went above and beyond in my final years of schooling. I vividly remember conversations with Mrs Fitzgerald and the whole of the music department (Mrs Allen-Ankins and Mrs Walkden especially), regarding career and post-schooling advice. The mentorship of my teachers provided me with the confidence and courage to not only pursue law but study abroad."

**Whilst Meg's commitment to her profession cannot be understated, she also makes time for family, friends, and her other passions – being active in the outdoors, hiking and running. Having balance in a high-stress career is hugely important to her, and she makes sure that weekends are dedicated to other things close to her heart. In particular, her strong family roots, which she credits with much of**

**her success.**

"Years of dedicated practice and various music competitions made me a highly disciplined and committed individual. Since finishing Year 12, I was accepted into the Golden Key International Honours Society within 12 months of commencing my degree in New Zealand, topped several law classes between USC and UoW, attained law clerkships at two leading national firms in my fifth year of my degree and achieved a Graduate Lawyer position following graduation at USC. All of which would not have been possible without the support of my family."

As for plans for the future, Meg is keeping her options open, still a health and fitness enthusiast she is training for the Point to Pinnacle half marathon in Tasmania. And, keen to practice law abroad, particularly London, she also admits, "Aviation runs in the family, so pursuing a career in corporate advisory for any of the major airlines is equally as appealing! The opportunities are endless." 🐾



## Class of 1995

# Mary-Anne Gill (Staines)



For some of us, our chosen profession can seem more like a 'calling'. Nothing could be truer for NCC 1995 graduate, Mary-Anne Gill. Having completed her entire schooling at NCC, or New Life Christian School as it was called when she first commenced, Mary-Anne went on to complete her Bachelor of Nursing at QUT in Brisbane, where she still lives.

When asked what influenced her career choice, Mary-Anne credits NCC with fostering her caring spirit and helping her to see the value in working hard for the things that mean something to you.

"NCC was such a nurturing environment to complete my schooling. I loved that we had so many different opportunities. I remember not only the academic side of my schooling but also going to nursing homes to sing and interact with the residents."

Mary-Anne was able to complete her senior work experience at Nambour's Selangor Private Hospital, but remembers vividly her Year 12 school-trip to Fiji, "... Spending time in a different culture was an excellent learning opportunity. Part of the preparation for our Fiji trip was earning money to pay for the trip. I remember our class wearing big white overalls and picking up rubbish at the Nambour Show to earn money towards the trip. All these experiences shaped me as a person and prepared me not only for my career but for life in general."

Ultimately, her decision came down to what felt right.

**"I wanted to work in a job caring for people. Nursing seemed to be the best choice for me as a year 12 student and it has been the perfect job for me, as time has shown."**

Indeed, it has. With a career spanning over 20 years, Mary-Anne's ability to nurture those in need throughout her own medical struggles, and raising a beautiful family, is a testament to her faith,

her inner strength, and her commitment to putting other's needs first: the hallmark of a great nurse.

"I feel extremely blessed to have three teenage children," she continues, "Seeing them grow up and achieving is one of my greatest pleasures... I had a big life change a few years ago when I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. I am keeping well with monthly treatments at the hospital, but this did force me to re-evaluate my life and job. I resigned from my job in a palliative care unit and expected that my career as a registered nurse was over."

However, her faith was rewarded when she was offered a role with Medibank Health Solutions as a phone triage nurse, working over several services triaging symptoms and giving health advice. She admits, "I was amazed to be offered a job that works so well for my health and family-wise..."

Mary-Anne devotes much of the remainder of her time to her church and runs a connection group for women – her other passion. On where the future will take her, she leans on her faith, "I am enjoying the place I am in my life right now and know that God is in control of my future. I am very content to wait and see where He leads me." 🙏

*Class of 1995, 20 year reunion in 2015*







## Class of 2010

# Samantha Clayton

The completion of school marks the real beginning of our choices to be the individual we genuinely want to be - the kind of person we are going to be for the rest of our lives. For Samantha Clayton, 2010 NCC graduate, there's an honesty and authenticity that runs through her achievements, which acts as a spotlight to the person she has become.

Genuineness is a character trait that feels almost out of place in our modern culture of fast business and brief encounters, and yet Sam has made it her life's business to both cultivate it and create it.

Currently living between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, Sam is kept busy as Director of Barnes Auto Co. - the largest and oldest heavy towing provider in Australia. Having spent her entire schooling career at NCC, Sam went on to study a three-year Bachelor of Business at Queensland University of Technology (QUT). The move made sense, explaining, "I love business and numbers... and have a strong passion for growing and improving businesses."

However, her decisions on where to begin her career leaned more towards her strong moral background and the positive influences of the people she'd met.

"There were some particularly influential teachers and students at NCC with strong moral grounding who I was able to look up to," she explains, "I get fulfilment out of working with the towing operators who put so much

into their job, which can be underappreciated due to the industry they are in. There are some real, genuine, hardworking Australians in the transport industry."

As Director of a company with six depots across South East QLD and Northern NSW, one could be forgiven for thinking that Sam has little spare time on her hands. And whilst this may be the case, she certainly makes time for the other things which have always been important to her, such as her role within Youth Insearch – one of Australia's most successful youth intervention programs.

"I am still actively involved in running programs for youth at risk; I have been doing this since school, so for 10 years now. It is how I met my partner as we both went through the program and we are both very passionate about helping support young people who are really struggling to change their lives around."

Her involvement and passion in this area of her life gave Sam the opportunity and honour of presenting as the keynote speaker for an International Women's Day function in Sydney for Youth Insearch and ANZ.

Keeping her grounded, Sam also makes time for family, "We are constantly part of each other's lives and have a strength in our family bond that I can't really explain... We had our first holiday together in February last year where all three generations went over to New Zealand. It was a first for all of us and the first time my father had ever been away with his parents. It was a special time."



## Class of 2015

# Marnie (Allen-Ankins) & Sam Noble

Choosing to have a surprise wedding at their engagement party on 11 January 2020, Marnie the youngest sister to Mikaela (2011) and Shania (2013), married Sam Noble (2015) within seven months of both her sisters special days. Suffice to say it's been a busy 12 months for the Allen-Ankins family (and parents!).

There are so many connections with NCC for this couple, with Sam's father Tom and Marnie's mother Judi both on the teaching staff at NCC. Sam and Marnie married at the Noble's property with 200 guests and had a beautiful marquee with lots of festoon lights set up on the grass with barrels, umbrellas and some backyard activities of darts, table tennis, lawn games etc. They decided to have only their sisters and brothers in the bridal party (bar one), Mikaela, Shaina and Annabelle (Sam's sister) with Sam having Oscar and Will (his brothers) and his best mate, Sam Vivian (who is an ex NCC student who graduated with them).

The couple honeymooned in Vanuatu for 10 days and hired a quad bike to adventure around the island each day.

Marnie studied a Bachelor of Creative Industries at USC

after Year 12 and Sam completed a Bachelor of Property Economics and Development both now working for a company called GRIP Leadership. They run leadership conferences for both primary and secondary school leaders across Australia and New Zealand.

"In Year 12 at NCC, Sam and I were honoured enough to be student leaders, and there are some things we achieved and are proud of, and some things I personally wish I did better. So when the offer at GRIP came up, it seemed like the perfect opportunity to be able to inspire and equip students and impart advice that we wish we'd taken on board in school, use the public speaking skills and love for creativity that I developed throughout my degree, as well as be able to travel and experience our beautiful country in the meantime." Marnie explained.

Marnie continues, "I think it's quite humorous what God uses from our past to equip us for our future careers and experiences sometimes. The opportunities at NCC provided through CAPA (such as the biannual musicals, drama performances, speech night items and elective





subjects) were all things that developed and inspired my love for the creative industries, and this shaped my decision to study within this field after school. However, I also never realised in Year 12 as Captain that my leadership experiences, faults and successes throughout that year would later be shared across stages in Australia to help other primary and secondary leaders learn from my mistakes, and to inspire their ideas and catalyse their goals being achieved for their leadership years also."

The skills earned through subjects studied at NCC, as well as the extra-curricular opportunities NCC provided, has shaped both of their decisions for study and equipped them in some way for the careers they hold now.

This duo with a passion for music and singing, perform at weddings and jump at any opportunity to play together. Content at the moment to enjoy their new life together, between work, church and family time they find themselves surfing, playing tennis and cheering on the St Kilda Saints.

Marnie explains that she's certain she wouldn't be who she is or where she is today if not for the grace of God.

"Any skills or opportunities I've been given is a gift and blessing from Him. From being involved at my local church, myself, Sam and a few others were all able to write a Christmas musical about the true message of Christmas and share it over ten nights to our local community. We all absolutely loved being able to combine our love for musicals and theatre with sharing the most important message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is projects like this that we absolutely love and would love to keep doing should we be able to." 🐦

For Sarah Thomas, life seemed destined to be an adventure. After reading an article about the flying doctors in her senior year of school, she was instantly drawn to the exciting career path.

## Class of 2001

# Sarah Thomas

Graduating in 2001, having spent her high-school career at NCC, Sarah was offered a place at Monash University for a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery degree. Whilst she accepted the offer, Sarah opted to defer for a year to work and travel overseas, soaking up all life had to offer. Following this, she made a move to Melbourne to begin her studies.

"The course was five years, of which two were in Melbourne, and the rest I rotated around rural Victoria," Sarah recalls, "After fourth year I deferred one year and spent half in Vanuatu volunteering for a cervical cancer program, and then I travelled through South America and completed the rest."

Sarah's adventures didn't stop there, with her and husband, Trent (a trained surgeon), welcoming two beautiful boys into the world: Parker and Bay. Now a GP in a private practice in Brisbane, her main interests including women's health, child health and mental health.

**"I was drawn to general practice because of the variety and scope of practice and the flexible lifestyle advantages, especially as a parent."**

As with every young family, the early years were a working juggle for Sarah as her husband completed his surgical training – an exceptionally arduous undertaking. Since completion, however, the family enjoy regular adventures together, "Our holidays are very intrepid and adventure-packed... and we live to hike and four-wheel-drive. We have just started introducing the kids to camping."

Although nineteen years have passed, Sarah remains in close contact with many of her NCC friends and teachers and remembers fondly the support and encouragement that she received, "I felt like my interests were fostered and encouraged. Although the Careers Advisor at the time was not aware of the process of applying for medicine, he was quick to learn and support me."

Sarah's plans this year were to move abroad with her family to London, however, due to the world health crisis of COVID-19, they have had to postpone their move. Despite this, Sarah's graciousness shines through as she explains, "I'm continuing my GP work and feel quite happy being able to support my patients through this time."

No doubt, her next adventure is just around the corner. 🌍







## NCC in Music

# Singapore Tour



Excellence in Instrumental and Performance Music is one of the special identifiers of NCC in the array of Sunshine Coast schools. The Year 4 immersion program for all students leads to the multi-award-winning bands through Junior, Middle and Senior Schools, culminating in the College Wind Symphony and Stage Band. In 2020, Braden Simm (Flute) and Dara Williams (Percussion) were selected, after audition, to take part in The Australian Honours Ensemble Program held at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University in October. This is a very prestigious program and we are delighted to have two students involved. Both students are hoping to pursue music careers after NCC and I'm sure they will be hugely successful.

NCC is non-selective and seeks to serve our community and parents who desire a Christian education for their young person. In line with these principles, our school community is very proud of all staff and students who contribute to the excellent Performance and Instrumental Music Program led by Mr Phil Smith. This program seeks to provide students with outstanding opportunities to grow in their musicality as well as the fundamental aim of the College to develop each student's character. The 2019 Singapore tour, as well as the many months of preparation, contributes significantly to this growth and service aim. An exciting

addition to the touring group in 2019 was the Vocal Group led by Mrs Deborah Smith. We also welcomed students and adults from Glasshouse Christian College, led by Miss Ebony Hilton, who joined NCC for the tour. In all, the 2019 tour group consisted of 62 students and 10 staff.

The Nambour Christian College Wind Symphony is one of the Sunshine Coast's premier student concert bands, regularly featuring in the placings at the Sunshine Coast Junior Eisteddfod. Our touring group featured mainly students from our middle school with a sprinkling of more experienced players. The group has previously toured to Hawaii, USA to take part in the Pacific Basin Music Festival 2013, where they were won a Silver Award. More recently they visited Rotorua, New Zealand for Rhapsody Rotorua 2016, where they were won a Gold Award.

**"For the students involved in our program, participating in international tours is the ultimate reward and is the culmination of many years of dedicated work by our students and staff", Mr Phil Smith, Head of Performance & Instrumental Music explains.**





Shaina, the middle sister of graduates Mikaela (2011) and Marnie (2015), has been extremely busy in both her professional and personal life since graduation in 2013.

### Class of 2013

## Shaina Bradley (Allen-Ankins)

Commencing a Diploma in Christian Ministry and Theology in 2014, she moved to Brisbane to study Psychology at UQ, soon transferring into a dual degree of Secondary Education and Arts (double major in English and Drama), graduating in December 2019.

Currently living in Sydney and in her first year teaching at Aquinas Catholic College; when asked what shaped her decision to move towards a teaching career, she stated,

**“The long story short is that I wanted to help people. Adolescence is such an important time of life in figuring out who you are and what you want to do, so having people in your life who genuinely care and want the best for you is vital.”**

Reflecting on her school days at NCC, Shaina says “When I was in Malawi, Africa, on the school mission trip in 2013, I was helping teach in the orphanage. I had several teachers comment on how I should go into teaching, though at the time I dismissed it. A year later, God reminded me of my experiences and the encouragement I had been given, and the timing must have been just right because I immediately decided to transfer out of psychology and into teaching.”

During her time at NCC, she came across many teachers who passionately poured themselves into their subjects as well as pastorally into the students. “I was inspired by Mrs Walkden’s caring nature, Mr Morgan and Mrs English’s enthusiasm for Drama, and Mrs Hepner’s zeal for English. Of course, having

both my parents in the field (Mrs Judi Allen-Ankins is NCC’s current Head of Creative and Performing Arts), encouraging me along this path also helped.”

Shaina is content and at peace with where she is in life right now. She married Matt, an accountant in June last year, and attended the weddings of both her sister’s - all within seven months. Shaina says “my ultimate plans for the future are to glorify God and help people cherish the Gospel, and nothing would give me more joy”. ☺





## Lucy Robertson

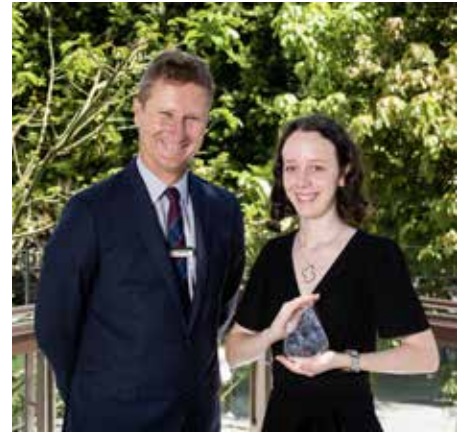
Lucy Robertson, 2019 graduate of Nambour Christian College, received a QCAA Distinguished Academic Achievers Award presented by Qld Minister for Education at a Brisbane ceremony in February 2020.

One of 31 students from Queensland, awarded from 37738 students who graduated in 2019, the award recognises Queensland's top-performing OP 1 Year 12 students for outstanding academic achievement in their senior school studies.

It came as no surprise to Mr Geoff van der Vliet, Principal at Nambour

Christian College who said, "Lucy's many achievements are outstanding and a source of inspiration to other students and encouragement to her teachers through all of her years at NCC. Her dedication and tenacity were demonstrated in all areas of her academic work and Lucy also demonstrated many of the benefits of being involved in music and the band program at the highest level for many years."

When asked what her career goal is Lucy states she wants "to work as a doctor in a specialist field such as cardiology or neurology, I am



motivated by the thought of having the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others."

In 2020, Lucy has been accepted to the Doctor of Medicine program (provisional entry) at The University of Queensland. 🐾

### Class of 2019

## Zane Hutchinson

Computer whiz Zane Hutchison knows precisely why he chose to study Computer Science at USC Moreton Bay – it's the newest course of its kind in the country. "Because computer science is a field that's changing so quickly, I knew that the newer the course, the more it would be up to date," Zane said.

The 18-year-old from Palmwoods was amongst the first students to attend Australia's newest university campus when classes began in February 2020.



The Nambour Christian College OP1 graduate has his eyes on the future, with plans to one day use his qualifications to provide new software to replace niche products that have become outdated. "Doing data entry for a job, I've spent a lot of time working with really terrible programs, so I'd like to one day create my own software," he said.

In his own time, Zane has taught himself programming languages including Python, Java, C++ and Swift, and put them to various uses, including share trading and mathematical modelling. "With computer science, you're not stuck doing one thing because there are so many different paths like artificial intelligence, data science, software development, website development and cybersecurity - you're not restricted," he said.

A keen surfer, artist and volleyball, Zane continues living at home while commuting by train from Palmwoods to campus and is enthusiastic about the career potential back home on the Sunshine Coast. "I've heard that the submarine cable landing at Maroochydore could create a sort of tech hub here, so I'd be open to working back on the Coast at the end of my degree," he said. ➡



## Class of 2011

# Mikaela Bazley (Allen-Ankins)

A love for science that started in Mrs Truasheim's Grade 8 science class, Mikaela Bazley (nee Allen-Ankins), 2011 graduate found she developed a sense for prediction of physical phenomena, and a deeper understanding of the world that shaped her study choices.

Mikaela is in her seventh year of study having completed a Bachelor of Science (Materials and Nanotechnology), Honours (Chemistry) and now completing a PhD in Analytical Chemistry at The University of Queensland. She resides in Brisbane with her new husband and NCC alumni of 2007, Trent Bazley. Although the couple both attended NCC, they never knew each other in school (though Mikaela recalls a guy with crazy hair and an esky-radio-lunchbox), they met through family friends.

The pair married in December 2019 at Rainbow Beach with 133 guests, most of which were family. The couple honeymooned in Bali. Amazingly, both of her sisters Shaina (2013) and Marnie (2015), also had weddings within seven months of each other.

After taking senior subjects in science and mathematics, and engaging the Christian worldview, Mikaela graduated from NCC with a strong understanding of both the physical and spiritual world, saying "both are essential if you want to make sense of reality" Mikaela explained.

**"This desire directed me into a career in science, where I realised the importance of applying knowledge within moral boundaries and the consequences of failing to do so. I am so grateful that NCC equipped me not only with the knowledge of what can be done but the wisdom to know what should be."**

In what must be a busy life, Mikaela enjoys running, cycling and the gym, living close by to UQ where she has easy access to her research laboratory. Trent and Mikaela take weekend trips to the coast as much as possible so Trent can fish and they can see their families.

Short-term plans for the future include finishing her PhD and after that "God knows, perhaps something in emergency response or emerging chemical threats and security". Mikaela puts her relationship with God (and her love for reading and studying, particularly the bible) at the centre of her life, stating "it has certainly defined who I am and directed me to where I am today". 🙏





## Class of 2007

# Trent Bazley

Recently married to Mikaela (2011 graduate), NCC alumni Trent Bazley is living in Brisbane and currently employed as a Case Manager for MATES in Construction, a mental health service for the construction, mining and energy industries after completing his Bachelor of Social Work in 2012.

For Trent, it was an easy decision to look at a profession in social work, having always enjoyed helping others.

**“NCC taught me the importance of character, how to relate well with staff and my peers and equipped me with the academic skills that prepared me for university.”**

Mikaela and Trent married at the end of 2019 with 133 guests mostly family at Rainbow Beach and is really enjoying life with his wife, Mikaela. Relishing some really close friendships and enjoying time with mates fishing, surfing and camping any chance he can he says that

**“My faith is central to my life and influences my job enormously. I draw strength from Jesus daily, and this is how I find I can help others who are battling with mental health issues. This has also helped me become who I am and how I operate in all I do.”** 🙏



NCC's education is built on three foundations; character development, scholarship and community. We see many students who display Christ-like virtues and strong Christian character, and Tara van der Vliet, 2013 graduate, is continuing her journey with these attributes to help make a difference.

## Class of 2013

# Tara van der Vliet

Tara and her brother Jake (2016) both attended NCC for their entire schooling career, with their father Geoff being a member of staff since 1988 and now College Principal, their connection to NCC still remains strong.

Currently residing in Brisbane, Tara is working as a pharmacist at the Princess Alexandra Hospital after completing her internship there in 2019 and her Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) at the University of Queensland in 2018.

As a Year 10 student at NCC, Tara was fortunate to be a part of the Malawi Service Trip, working with Australian health professionals in some very desolate villages. This is where she witnessed first-hand the difference in access to medical care and medications can make to someone's life. Tara says, "As a result, I became very motivated to pursue a career in pharmacy and developed a particular interest in the multidisciplinary team and clinical environment of hospital pharmacy."

"During my time at NCC, I learnt many important skills and aspects of Christian character. I was fortunate to be part of several service trips, and it was on these that I learnt what life was truly like for many people living in poverty around the world. I was very humbled by these trips and realised that our purpose in life is far more than just focusing on our success. As a result, I have been motivated to develop skills and utilise resources to serve others, particularly those less fortunate than myself. It is also this mindset and these lessons that have helped me keep my eyes on the bigger picture throughout stressful times in life."

Tara enjoys travelling 'home' to the Sunshine Coast regularly on weekends. Having a love of any form of travel, visiting Japan just prior to COVID-19 for a brief



skiing holiday with friends. Tara thoroughly enjoys working at the Princess Alexandra Hospital and going on various short-term service trips to third world countries. Tara has a particular interest in the treatment of infectious diseases and found it very interesting to be part of the health system during COVID-19.

Excitingly, Tara is currently working with senior pharmacists at the PA Hospital to develop a larger network of health professionals who are passionate about serving people in more disadvantaged communities around the world. The goal is to eventually run various events in this area and have a thriving special interest group where people support each other in serving both overseas and within Australia. If you would like further information about this project, please email: [tara.vandervliet@uq.net.au](mailto:tara.vandervliet@uq.net.au).

Tara reflected that she feels very fortunate to have grown up in such a supportive community at NCC, explaining that "I would not be where I am today if it wasn't for some incredible mentors throughout my schooling years at NCC and then those I have met through university. It has been amazing to look back and see how God has opened exactly the right doors and put the right people in my path. I am very excited to see what the next few years bring." 🙌





For Sunshine McDonald, 1991 NCC Graduate, her interest in biology and desire to help people were the main drivers in guiding her decision to study Speech Pathology.

## Class of 1991

# Sunshine McDonald

Having completed all but one year of schooling at NCC, Sunshine benefited from the strength and support of the close-knit community.

**“I loved my school years with wonderful teachers and staff, and great friendships – there were only 25 in the whole of my year 12, so we knew each other pretty well! Teaching staff encouraged me to excel and gave me the support to do so.”**

Following high school, Sunshine was accepted into a four-year Bachelor of Speech Pathology at The University of Queensland and now works full-time in her private practice in Brisbane. When asked how she maintains the balance in her life, Sunshine admits, “With a teacher husband, son in high school and daughter in primary, and working full time in private practice, life is very busy...”

However, as many other families around Australia have learned this year, prioritising the things that genuinely matter has been Sunshine’s saving grace.

“I’m trying to learn to focus on one thing at a time and not to let work permeate my home life! Trying to learn to prioritise and say no when appropriate.”

This balance has meant that Sunshine has also had the opportunity to work with an organisation called Outback Futures, providing mental and allied health support for people living in remote parts of far-west Queensland.

Not surprisingly, working in those beautiful areas of the country has fuelled a new craving to explore and dream a little bigger.

“My desire to travel further has been stoked again after some great, recent family road trips within Australia, my quarterly trips to Longreach and Barcaldine with my work with Outback Futures, and an upcoming family holiday in New Zealand...” adding, “I also look forward to the possibility of using my professional skills in some short-term trips in third-world countries once my own children are older.” 🐾





## NCC on the Farm

# Raising students that care

Built on the grounds of an old pineapple farm, Nambour Christian College has always had its roots in agriculture. For 40 years, the College community has acted as stewards of the land, teaching students the importance of quality food and farming, and imparting the greater life lessons that caring for animals and the environment offers.

Because of this, over time, the College farm and Agricultural Science program has grown to become one of the most respected on the Sunshine Coast.

**“Our fully functioning farm has gradually expanded to now take up most of the land that the school buildings don’t take up!” says Phil Rienecker, Head of Agricultural Science. “With animals, veggies, fruit and more, it’s not only a place for education but also a place of respite; where children can come to connect with nature and animals.”**

And it’s this flourishing farm that provides the base for the College’s many agricultural programs. In Years 7 and 8, the College runs a compulsory

elective rotation system, in which every student takes part in a six-week block of Agricultural Science. “In Year 7 we teach students all the stages of the veggie growing cycle: the basics of soil care, and how to dig, plant, grow and harvest their own crops,” Mr Rienecker explains. “They might plant broccoli one week, then the following week they might harvest some corn that a previous rotation planted.”

In Year 8, the students are given the important responsibility of looking after the chickens. “We have 20 laying chickens that are given plenty of space to roam at the farm,” Phil says. “Students learn how to look after them and what to feed them.”

Students in Year 8 also learn the value of composting, returning the goodness of any food scraps to the soil. “We look at how we can all be part of the global warming solution by efficiently composting food scraps, rather than those scraps ending up in landfill,” Phil continues. “Many students take their new-found skills home to start their own compost and veggie patches.”

In Year 9, Agricultural Science becomes an elective subject and students challenge themselves with more in-depth projects. “A very popular Year 9 project is

one in which students lease an 8m<sup>2</sup> garden to grow their own crop,” Phil says. “They each give me \$20 to cover the lease of the land, seeds, fertiliser and other resources needed. They then research, plan the crop, plant, maintain, harvest and sell their crop, and they get to keep any money they make. It’s not uncommon for students to realise a 300 per cent profit on their original investment!” As students progress through the program, the projects become increasingly involved.

“Year 11 is currently doing a major assignment on horse nutrition and how to manage small acreage pastures on the Sunshine Coast,” says Phil. “Many people don’t realise that not all pasture grasses are healthy for horses, and there are a few species on the Sunshine Coast that are becoming more prevalent on small acreage blocks that can make horses quite sick.”

Though Agricultural Science is a subject predominantly for Years 7–12, the Prep, Kindergarten and Junior students (Years 1 to 6) are also regular visitors to the farm. “The younger students might come to the farm as part of their class time to chat to Farmer Barry, to see the lettuces and veggies, feed the chickens, or simply







## Offering a more organic style of learning, Agricultural Science at Nambour Christian College goes beyond the classroom to shape a generation of students that genuinely care for the land.

use the farm to add another layer to their classroom studies."

### BEYOND THE Paddock

As well as the direct skills that Agricultural Science imparts, regular exposure to farming and animals brings a wealth of other skills. "The projects the students get involved in teach skills that go far beyond the basics of agriculture," Phil says. "They are exposed to business skills as they learn to sell crops, maths as they calculate, weigh and measure, science as they test and hypothesise, and English as they discuss and communicate."

But beyond that, there are bigger life lessons being acquired. "The farming cycle is the perfect example of patience and delayed gratification. You can't have it all now... you have to work at things before you harvest a reward," continues Mr Rienecker. "They also get tremendous satisfaction from the work because they get to see tangible results: 'I planted that broccoli, I mulched those citrus trees',

'I trained that horse'. They quickly find that working in the garden isn't easy – it takes effort and perseverance – but when they look at it in six or 12 weeks' time and harvest, it's a genuine feeling of pride and accomplishment."

### RECONNECTING WITH NATURE

Due to increased urbanisation over recent years, many children are no longer growing up with access to a natural environment. This disconnect from nature means that caring for animals and the environment is something that needs to be taught to kids, and Nambour Christian College's farm plays a large part in this for their students.

"Animals depend on us for food, water, and care, and these are all skills that need to be learnt," says Mr Rienecker. "Thanks to the farm on-site, we have the opportunity to teach all of our students the responsibility of animal care; to know what it eats, and what the signs are if it's not well. If I can kick kids off on that journey, I've set them up with some lifelong

skills to be responsible and compassionate owners of animals."

### LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

Though Agricultural Science might feel quite far removed from everyday urban life it is surprisingly relevant to everyone's day. "We come into contact with agriculture

every day," explains Mr Rienecker. "The clothes you wear, the coffee you drink, the food on your table, your timber deck – these things are all grown and harvested for you." Because of this demand, agriculture makes up a significant percentage of today's workforce in Australia.

**"Agriculture today is highly scientific and a very viable career path, thanks to the technology boom it's much more complex than you might think! It's a high-tech profession – from using drones to scan fields and state-of-the-art irrigation systems through to research trials and genetics of breeding veggies. We need smart people to look after the land, if we don't look after the soil then the planet is in a mess."**

But most of all, the program is about establishing a genuine love for the land that kids can take through to adulthood. "Agricultural Science students are always elbow-deep in hands-on learning; they get to go outside and discover a real freedom from the classroom," says Phil. "And they quickly discover how much fun it can be!" 🌱



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## Stay in Contact

# NCC Alumni Facebook Page

This is a group for all previous students of Nambour Christian College, created to connect NCC Alumni with the College community and to allow for greater networking. College events and annual reunions will also be advertised here.

Please invite your fellow Alumni to join this page, and stay up to date with College news. Alumni are welcome to post their achievements, news, information and school photos on this page.

# NCC Past Students Association

NCC past students are an integral part of our community and we welcome their continued involvement in, and support of, College life. All former students are automatically life members of our Past Students Association, and we encourage them to not only keep us up to date with their contact details, but also to inform us of any items of interest that can be shared with the College community.

Past students can advise the College of any relevant details by emailing us at: [alumni@ncc.qld.edu.au](mailto:alumni@ncc.qld.edu.au)

Want to organise a reunion for your year level? Let us know as we can assist with contact details, venue and costs. For more information, or if you have information which may be of interest to NCC Alumni, please email [alumni@ncc.qld.edu.au](mailto:alumni@ncc.qld.edu.au)



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