



# CHESO NEWS

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## Term 2 Issue 2

### *Principal's Report*

In this issue I would like to welcome our Aboriginal community. While the number of Aboriginal students at Chester Hill HS is relatively small, they are growing in number. I am fiercely proud of the way Cheso welcomes and supports this important group of our learning community. I know the work with our Aboriginal students is outstanding and that we have been asked on a number of recent occasions to showcase our approach for other schools. As with all groups within the school, we will continually strive to serve our community by improving the educational outcomes of all students.

### **Sorry Day**

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May was National Sorry day. CHHS held a special ceremony in recognition of the historic occasion in 2008 when the then Prime Minister of Australia, **Kevin Rudd** apologised, on behalf of the nation, for the injustices and harms done to all Aboriginal peoples. We installed a second flagpole so that we can fly the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Island flag alongside the Australian flag. The following is part of my speech to mark this occasion.

“The word ‘sorry’ is the usual form of an

apology. An ‘apology’ is defined by the Macquarie Dictionary as ‘an expression of regret offered for some fault, failure, insult or injury.’ When we say sorry today we are recognising that all of these wrongs can be applied to our treatment of Aboriginal people. However, I would like to focus on the word, “insult” as way of symbolically representing the way Aboriginal people were treated and unfortunately, continue to be treated in many respects, today. There have been many such insults over the years.

The insult I’m referring to occurred 110 years ago when Australia was rightly celebrating the Federation of the nation on the first day of the new century, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1901. Many special events were commissioned for the occasion, including a portrait of the opening of Parliament by the famous Australian painter, **Tom Roberts**. Another eminent Australian, **Professor Scott** of Melbourne University, was commissioned to write an official ‘History of Australia’ from 1788 until the turn of the century. It took **Professor Scott** five years to write the history and it was more than 500 pages long. Every High School in Australia received a copy for their libraries. What ‘distinguished’ this history was the fact that nowhere, in the 500 pages, was a reference or mention of the Aboriginal

peoples. Not even one. His history had precluded them because to him they did not exist.

Aboriginal people have occupied and cared for this land for 60,000 years. In that time there have been at least two and a half million generations of families being raised, making today's Aboriginal people the inheritors of the oldest cultural group in the world. To ignore these facts in a history of this land was a terrible insult. This would be reason enough to say "Sorry" and does not even include the massacres, the enforced poverty or the stolen generations.

Today is part of the reconciliation process where we, as a country, acknowledge the wrongs perpetrated on the Aboriginal nations. The health of our democracy depends on the respect we show each other. Today we say sorry in respect to our indigenous peoples."

### **Recent Events**

Over the last couple of weeks we have hosted two important groups of visitors. The first was a visit by the COAG Reform Council (CRC), a division of the Commonwealth Organisation of Australian Government (COAG). We were selected by the Regional Director, **Mr. Tom Urey** to present our work in the Smarter Schools, National Partnerships, Low SES program. This Commonwealth body reports back to the Federal Government on how its funding is being used to improve educational outcomes for students. During this time they were able to interview **Ms. Helen Apostle**, our Aboriginal Support Teacher and get an overview of our National Partnerships program. I would like to share with you their 'thank you' letter.

"We would like to thank all the teachers and students at CHHS. We appreciate your collective efforts for taking the time to meet

with members of the COAG Reform Council. I know that the CRC found the visit to be very valuable and will help us understand the challenges of implementing the COAG agenda and the tremendous efforts taking place in your school. My colleagues found CHHS to be very inspiring. We were particularly pleased to meet with your Aboriginal Support Teacher and see the impact she is having on your 17 Aboriginal students and their families. Thanks again, we really appreciate your time and trouble and please continue your spectacular efforts on behalf of your community!"

### **Cheso: A National Partnerships Showcase!**

Another pleasing aspect of all this attention was that Cheso was selected to be showcased as one of the high schools represented on the Smarter Schools, Low SES National Partnership (NP) website. Recently, we hosted a film crew who recorded some interviews and 'general' footage of our National Partnership program initiatives. This footage will be placed on the website as an example of the outcomes that can be achieved with the generous NP funding. I would particularly like to thank our DP, **Ms. Mateus** for her organisation of the day. Cheso will be featured as one of the best examples of NP schools!

### **Yr.12 Report Night**

In Week 5, we hosted our Yr.12 report night. While very successful in terms of many families being able to liaise with their child's teachers, the fact remains that around 40% of families did not avail themselves of this special opportunity. If parents cannot make the night, they are always welcome to make individual appointments to see teachers. Remember, education is always a three-way partnership. The support we can provide necessarily depends on the level of communication between student, home and school.

### **Staff Training**

The latest staff training has involved mandatory reporting requirements for Child Protection; how to incorporate Information and Communicative Technologies (ICT) into teaching programs and how to best adapt teaching to the needs of students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE). Parents can be assured that at Chester Hill HS, staff undertake professional learning so as best to equip themselves to meet the challenges of the changing education environment.

### **Work Experience**

In Week 7, all Yr.10 completed one week's work experience. Congratulations are given to all students who represented the school so well during this time. Thank you to **Ms. Patrizi** and **Ms. Corcoran** for all the excellent organisation and follow through that made this valuable learning experience possible..

### **Donna Goodwin's Retirement**

It was with great sadness that we farewelled **Ms. Donna Goodwin** on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. **Donna** had been with the school for 26 years and was, without a doubt, one of the finest teachers at CHHS in this time. She taught many senior classes and was admired by all staff and students. We wish **Donna** well in her new position.

### **Brian Miller**

### **The Stand Tall Project**

Chester Hill High School was invited to participate in a program to look at the relationship between Police and Muslim students.

The program was called the Stand Tall Project and this involved Muslim students in our Year 10 group being invited to participate

in a range of activities working with Bankstown Police over a 6 week period.

The boys were first and 13 boys completed the three week program followed by 9 girls, combining with Bankstown Girls High, completing their 3 week program. Topics included; road safety, general policing, domestic violence, the law, plus building positive relationships through discussions, games and excursions to Luna Park and Villawood Bowling and Laser Challenge with the Bankstown Police.

The Program finale was the students receiving certificates from the Bankstown Superintendent in front of their parents, friends and the media.

The students were positive ambassadors for Cheso and congratulations go to all 22 students. The article that follows was from the Bankstown Torch.

### **Mr P. Rosewall**

Deputy Principal

Wednesday, May 25, 2011 THE TORCH

## **Police take on youth in soccer, bowling, have skirmish, Luna Park fun Stand Tall plan**

POLICE and school students have taken part in an innovative program aimed at breaking down cultural stereotypes and bolstering community relations.

The Stand Tall Project aims to promote harmony between police and Muslim youths in the Bankstown area by dismantling ethnic and religious typecasts and improving communication.

Thirty-four high school students were mentored by 16 officers from Bankstown Local Area Command during the three-day program in March and April.

The program included in-depth discussions on how police and local youths perceive each other, as well as domestic violence, road safety and career development.



Chester Hill High School student twins Lillian and Mahmoud Aycheh took part in the Stand Tall mentoring project with Bankstown Police, with Mahmoud saying that riding in a police car without being in trouble was a highlight for him.

Police and students also competed in a friendly indoor soccer match, 10-pin bowling and laser skirmish, and visited Luna Park.

The project is a joint-initiative between NSW Police Force, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Australian Multicultural Foundation.

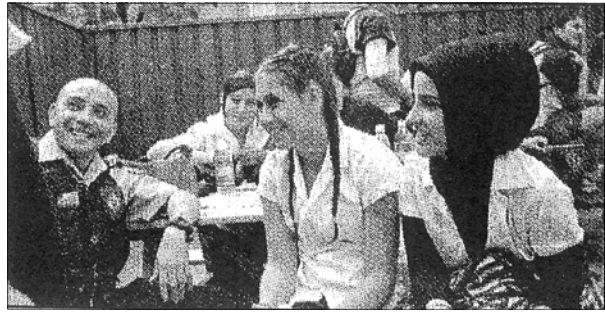
Bankstown Local Area Commander Superintendent Dave Eardley said the project had been an overwhelming success.

"This has been a great initiative and embraced by my officers and the students alike," Supt Eardley said.

"Police and students had the opportunity to discuss issues, such as cultural and religious stereotypes, perceptions of police, domestic violence and road safety.

"But they also got the chance to participate in activities that allowed them to bond and improve relations.

"I'd like to congratulate both the police and students who participated in the program for embracing the opportunity and making the most of it."



Bankstown Girls High School students with Police during Stand Tall project. Photos by GEORGE VOULGARPOULOS.



Bankstown Girls High School and Chester Hill High School students had fun with Bankstown Police during 10-pin bowling and laser skirmish activities.



Bankstown Police helped to dismantle ethnic and religious typecasts during the Stand Tall project.

## No longer the enemy

By MICK ROBERTS

WHILE both gained a better attitude towards law enforcement, Chester Hill High School twins Lillian and Mahmoud Aycheh brought away lasting memories of the Stand Tall project.

The teenagers were two of 34 local high school students mentored by 16 Bankstown police officers during the program.

Mahmoud said riding in a police car was incentive enough for him to take part in the program.

"Travelling in a police car without really being in trouble was a highlight for me," he said.

Mahmoud said many of his mates, including him-

self, looked upon the law as 'the enemy', and not to be trusted. That view for Mahmoud has changed and he is eager to share that with his peers.

The two 15-year-olds both agreed that they brought away a completely different attitude towards police officers.

"After communicating with the police officers, it taught me just because they're in uniform they are no different to you and me," Lillian said.

"They're people, with good and bad personalities.

"You can't judge a book by its cover. I have a lot of appreciation now for how they make our community safer."

Mahmoud said he wanted his mates to know he met "some good cops" and not to treat the law disrespectfully.

"They just want to keep everyone safe. They have their uniforms, and we have ours ... they're just people," he said.

Chester Hill High School deputy principal Perry Rosewall said 13 boys and nine girls from the school took part in the program.

"We have a very multicultural school, with Arabic students one of the largest groups," Mr Rosewall said.

"The program is a great way of breaking down barriers and building respect for the police uniform," he said.

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

This term we have started working in close partnership with our primary schools, in particular Villawood North Public School, in a transition to High School Program. Four of our teachers observed lessons at the primary school and four of the primary school teachers then observed our lessons. Our aim is to increase communication between our school and the primary schools and therefore improve the transition process for our students as they come into Year 7 from the primary school setting. We are implementing strategies to improve not only the physical transition to high school but also the transition in the teaching and learning experiences. We plan to continue with this program with not only Villawood North but also the other primary schools in our area.

Our Aboriginal community has been invited to the school again this term for our Aboriginal Parent Meeting, as well as to our ceremonies for Sorry Day and Reconciliation Day. Congratulations to **Taminya Brown** who delivered an outstanding speech at both events. Thank you also to **Jye Brown** who raised the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags that we now proudly display in our quadrangle. Our Aboriginal students have been involved in many cultural activities, including an excursion to the Australian Museum to celebrate the beginning of NAIDOC Week. Our Aboriginal boys have been involved in the preparation of an Aboriginal dance for Flag Day. The first time this has happened at Cheso! Thank you to the parents who have assisted our students in preparation for their Flag Day performance, especially **Mel Brown** for her support, and a huge thank you to **Helen Apostle, Shannon Williams** and **Shannon Thorne** who come in to teach the dance to the boys. It looks to be a most memorable experience!

As part of the National Partnership Program, our school was selected to be filmed for a Vodcast to appear on the DET Smarter schools website. The National Partnership program is a nationwide program and 2 high schools and 2 primary schools were selected to be filmed from each state. We are one of those high schools. Chester Hill was selected due to the quality programs that we are running at our school. In particular, our Refugee Transition Program, our Aboriginal Program and our focus on improving student outcomes for ESL students. A huge thank you to all the staff who were involved in the filming. Thank you also to the great teachers who make these programs as successful as they are. The success of these programs is due to their hard work and dedication. Thank you!

Below is an excerpt of the email we received from the crew who came to film our school.

*Dear **Mr Miller** and **Ms Mateus**,  
Thank you both very much for your time on Thursday. There's so much going on at Chester Hill, it's going to be a challenge to capture it! We'll probably use quite a bit of your interviews to bring it home to the viewer just how jam-packed the school is with great initiatives. Could you please also pass on our thanks to all our interviewees?*

*Thank you also for your generous hospitality.*

*We are expecting post production to take quite a long time (around two to three months). Once I get the first cut I will send it on to you and NSW DET to check for any glaring errors. After your feedback, we'll put together a final version and publish it on our website at [www.smarterschools.gov.au](http://www.smarterschools.gov.au).*

*Thanks again for welcoming us into your school.*

*Kind regards,*

**M Holcombe**

*QLD and TAS Team*

*Smarter Schools Partnership Branch*

Our aim at Cheso is to continue providing our students with quality teaching and learning to improve.

**Christina Mateus**

DP National Partnerships

### **New technology tools for your child**

Over the next few weeks students will see their student portal change with a new look, enhanced features and a new URL. Four new student portals have been developed to support the different needs of students: Kindergarten to Year 2, Years 3-6, Years 7-12 and TAFE.

On 14 June 2011 Year 9 students will receive their new student portal. Year 9 will be followed by Year 10, Years 7 and 8, then TAFE. Years 11 and 12, Kindergarten to Year 2 and finally Years 3 to 6 will follow early in term 3.

From 14 June 2011 all school students will access their student portal, from home and at school, from a new URL: <http://student.det.nsw.edu.au>, whether or not they have access to the new student portal.

Students will be able to search, access and organise information for school tasks via their student portal on computers used at home or at school, at any time. The new student portal will have timetable and calendar portlets for students to add their own details. Students will also be able make their

portal look the way they want by changing the colour scheme and rearranging, opening or closing portlets.

### **Masterchef at Cheso**

Earlier this term, students from Year 9 Food Technology were studying the topic “Celebrating with Food”. As part of their studies, students have to complete a Design Challenge where they have to design, bake



**Judith Bow, Kelly Su and Jaelyn Lim**

and decorate a cake for a special occasion of their own choosing. A range of different food decorating techniques was explored throughout the unit and as a result, student have experimented and applied some of these techniques onto their cakes. A range of beautifully decorated cakes was produced on the day and students thoroughly enjoyed the entire design experience.

Congratulations on the creative effort by Year 9 Food Technology students and we might just have discovered the next **Adriano Zumbo** at Cheso!



A small sample on some of the creative cakes produced by Year 9 Food Technology students.



## Aboriginal News

### *Naidoc Week*

All the Aboriginal Students went on an excursion to the Australian Museum to see the Traditional Aboriginal Dancers. The Descendance Dance Group, is a dance program including both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Cultures - songs and dances focusing on Australia's unique native animals, and also Torres Strait Island play and dances.



### *Flag Day*

Our Aboriginal boys will be performing a traditional Aboriginal Dance for Flag Day. We were extremely fortunate to have Shannon Thorne from Marumali Health Service and Shannon Williams from Department of Education also known as Brother Black, a well-known Rap artist. This is the first time in our Flag Day history we will have had an Aboriginal performance.

### *P&F Meeting*

I would like to thank all the parents and guests for attending the P&F meeting. A big thank you to **Mel Brown** who has worked tirelessly for our Aboriginal Students.

### *Sorry Day and Reconciliation*

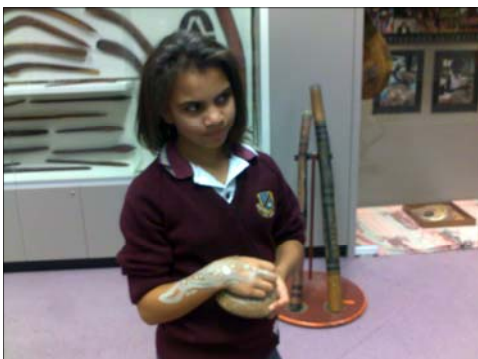
I would like to thank **Taminya Brown**, Year 11, for an amazing speech given to the whole school during those ceremonies and to **Jye Brown**, Year 7, for the Flag Raising event.

### *Aboriginal Education Conference Quality Teaching and Learning*

On Wednesday the 1st of June 2011, 180 teachers gathered at Fairfield RSL Club to listen to speeches about Aboriginal Education. **Kyle Cain**, Year 8, gave an amazing speech "*What makes a great teacher*". He spoke with confidence and held the attention of the audience the entire time.

### **Ms H. Apostle**

Aboriginal Support Teacher



**Year 10 Work Experience**

During Week 7 all of Year 10 students did work experience. A wide range of work was sought by our students. In the health field, students went out to Blacktown and Fairfield Hospitals for nursing, local pharmacists and veterinary clinics. Retail placements included specialty fashion shops, large chain supermarkets, department stores and a variety of small retail operators. Trades were very popular with the boys especially auto-mechanics and carpentry and hairdressing for the girls. Just a reminder, girls you can get into auto –mechanics and carpentry and boys you can do hairdressing. Childcare was another popular choice for both female and male students, this is an industry that is rapidly expanding and has good job