



Cartoon: Logan Pugsley

## Justice at the heart of school learning

### EDITORIAL

By **NATHAN LARA**

HISTORY has taught us that our greatest moments lie in a harmonised goal for justice.

Collectively educating young people to have compassion and awareness of the injustices in the world around them is as vital as their academic achievement. Incorporating social awareness into education will make a significant difference to the nature of society in the future.

A structured community service program would be a valuable addition to the NSW school curriculum, and a vital step in creating a stronger, more caring and just society.

The implementation of a two-year mandatory social justice program known as Zivildienst in countries such as Germany and Switzerland, has led to lower crime and higher mortality rates for young people, and more students graduating.

Some of this is already done in schools through programs such as The Duke of Edinburgh Project and various school leadership programs. At my school, St Edward's Christian Brothers' stu-

dents in years 8 to 12 undertake the compulsory Waterford Project.

Students dedicate 15 hours of community service each year, with the option of contributing additional hours and achieving Waterford Honours when they complete one hundred hours in a school year. However, while this recognition for service is valued, it is the act of service itself that is the reward.

Participation in this program has provided me with valuable life skills, an appreciation for justice, and a passion for service. This has been an important part of my schooling, and provided the inspiration for the person I am, and wish to become.

The implementation of a compulsory community service program in NSW schools should be our goal.

According to the Board of Studies, there are approximately 228,000 students from years 10 to 12 in NSW.

This could mean a total of over four million hours of community service across the state. What a difference that could make.

The need for justice to be at the heart of the NSW school curriculum, and Australia, is paramount to pave the way for young people on the road to adulthood.

# Eddies goes beyond our borders to help

By **AARON BRUCHHAUSER**

ST Edward's College is widely recognised for social justice and working in the community. However, as the school grows, and the Christian Brothers extend their helping hands to the developing world, St Edward's will also.

In 2011, Dr Michael Slattery and his wife visited Kenya for an immersion program with the Christian Brother's in three schools: The Ruben School, Mary Rice and Edmund Rice Youth Group. All of which are supported by the EREA community. St Edward's undertakes regular fundraising to do their bit through Edmund Rice International and special activities like the infamous Founder's Day celebrations.

The money raised goes towards the funding and building of schools and health clinics, typically used to treat HIV; access to clean water, and nutrition programs. The money also contributes to the feeding and clothing of the children at the schools. Each day they receive breakfast and lunch, as well as clothing.

After school is finished for the day, these children return to their homes in the Kabira slum, where 1.5 million people call home. Here there is no fresh water, no electricity and poor sanitation. Yet the children are happy, and despite their situation look forward to arriving at school the next day.



Principal Dr Michael Slattery, East African facilitator Samuel Karanja, with students Kirt Anthony, Jack Dixon, Jack Waining, Dean Bonnic.

To gain an understanding of the challenges faced living in the slum, each year staff and students from the college volunteer to take part in a 14-day immersion program in Kenya where they visit the slum where the schools are located. They are able to contribute to the learning of the students and interact with locals. Teacher Fran Toomey participated in the program in 2013 and claimed it was life-changing, a mixture of

"inspiration, devastation and happiness".

To date, six of the college staff, and many more students, have participated in the immersion. It has become a tradition for some year 12 graduating students to spend their schoolies year working in the slum. Dr Slattery is a great supporter of the program and highlights its value: "A humbling experience, but with a great sense of hope for the future."

## Gliders grateful for awareness program

By **ASHER JINTOORKAR**

YEAR 10 students from St Edward's and St Joseph's Colleges have been participating in a leadership program to help primary school students design an awareness campaign for the yellow bellied glider.

The students developed their mentoring at Taronga Zoo in a two-day training session and learnt about various threatened species. The mentors then visited Holy Cross and St Patrick's Primary Schools

to help students design and create their campaigns. These focused on practical ways to help the glider. Projects included radio and movie advertisements, posters and stage performances. This culminated in an exhibition day at Holy Cross Primary with the community invited to attend.

Warwick Baines, careers co-ordinator, believes it has been a great success, "it has publicised this endangered species and been a fantastic exercise for all the students."



St Edward's students Kyle Hughes and Liam Saddler with year 4 students from Holy Cross Catholic School Kincumber.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS SCHOOL NEWSPAPER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE COMPETITION SPONSORS



SEE THE ENTRIES ONLINE AT [theherald.com.au/community/newspapers-in-education/](http://theherald.com.au/community/newspapers-in-education/)



Saving Money  
Makes a lot of  
cents!  
So Save Your  
Money With  
Newcastle  
Permanent!

## Here for their future, here for the community

13 19 87 [newcastlepermanent.com.au](http://newcastlepermanent.com.au)

Here for good. **NEWCASTLE PERMANENT**

Advertisement created by Daniel Osling, of St Edward's Christian Brothers Gosford.