CLASS OF 2019 CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY

Speech by Nareen Robinson, Year 12 YLC 2019

It is my honour this morning to add my congratulations to the class of 2019 on their outstanding contributions to the Camberwell Girls community in all facets throughout their time spent with us.

My first experience with the class of 2019 came in the form of Eloise Shilling back in 2014 delivering a student reflection at the Year 7 orientation morning for the girls that are now our current Year 12 students. She was a bundle of energy and enthusiasm for all that she had been a part of in her first year at Camberwell and as a parent in the audience that day, I recall being enthralled by the passion and confidence she had and thinking what an amazing place Camberwell Girls must be to produce students like this in such a short space of time.

Very quickly, I learnt that there were a whole year level like her, taking advantage of all sorts of opportunities presented and this is such an integral part of the Camberwell Girls fabric. There are a wealth of clubs, ensembles, choirs, sporting teams, debating teams, service learning initiatives, environmental groups, literary groups, theatre and production crews, dance & drama groups (it is an endless list) that students are able to contribute too.

The class of 2019 made extraordinary contributions to all of these different arenas and the value they added to the richness of the school culture as a result is without measure. They often spoke about wanting to improve school culture and the feeling of inclusivity for all and yet were unsure of how to physically do that. What they perhaps didn’t realise at the time was they were actively doing this through their participation and enjoyment of activities and by setting the right example for others by being involved and thriving in all of the ways they were able to.

Their participation in major school events such as the athletics carnival last year, where we had 100% attendance from our Year 12 girls, fully involved in all aspects of the day, and coming together in one large circle at the end of the day singing what was often their theme song “shine Jesus shine”. It was one of those incredibly special moments or an ‘aha’ moment if you like of “this is the school culture you are seeking” this was living and breathing the values that they wanted so desperately to instill.

Enjoyment, engagement, leading by example and bringing others along in the journey with them.
By their actions, not words, they were able to send a powerful message to others and one that will live on far beyond their time here.

I encourage all of you to remain committed to those interests and talents that are not classroom based. Involve yourselves wholeheartedly and others will benefit from your commitment and service.

Each year, on a number of occasions you will hear Old Grammarians speak about their time here at school and each of them fondly remembers the things they did outside of their academic studies. It is here you will learn the skills that can’t be taught sitting behind a desk and it is here you will feed your passion for things bigger and bolder than books and study.

I am not a Camberwell grammarian; however I am a proud old grammarian of Hay War Memorial High school in NSW where I spent my early secondary years and then Knoxfield College, Melbourne for my VCE years. All of my best memories from both schools involve the jazz band, big band, choirs, camps and as many sport teams and opportunities I could get my hands on. The class of 2019 were firm believers in being involved in all aspects of a Camberwell Girls schooling.

We are thrilled to share that Maddy Brake has been accepted into the Victorian College of the Arts where she will study Design and production and there is no doubt her passion and experience in this sphere was cultivated and nurtured by Keira Lyons and others through the opportunities given and embraced whilst Maddy was here at Camberwell.

Genevieve Alexie – who you will all remember as a stunning vocalist in many productions and music performances was also accepted into the Conservatorium at the VCA however has chosen instead to study Law & International Studies in order to keep singing as her hobby Again, her talents were appreciated and encouraged and she never doubted for a moment that she couldn’t or wouldn’t remain involved throughout her VCE years.

Another member of the 2019 cohort, Shivani Gupta, who had her artwork shortlisted for the National Gallery of Victoria’s Top Arts will go on to study Textile Design at RMIT. Yvonne Jin, who designed stickers for our environmental group “Froggies” and Charlotte Dempsey who designed our “Right Waste in the Right Place” signage will both go on to study Interior Design (Honours) and Communication Design (Honours) respectively.

I highlight these students as an encouragement to you all to begin something in the first instance, take that hard first step and then continue on with your passions and those things that make you inherently happy. All of these girls continued to be involved in school life not at the expense of their academic studies, but as an enhancement to their experiences and knowledge.
Another example of girls continuing to be involved and connected, has never been more evident than what we have witnessed in
the last couple of weeks with so many familiar faces roaming the school grounds. Bianca Phan has been coaching tennis, Katie
Lutze coaching netball, Tilly Kutey choreographing for the Creative Arts festival, and our resident Administration / yard duty / sport coaching / archiving / display hanging / all around amazing team of Lucy Bartram, Eloise Schilling, Steph Cheah and Maddy Georges have shown their willingness to do whatever is asked of them.

The graduates of 2019 displayed all of the traits we value at Camberwell Girls. They were courageous, passionate, strong willed,
full of humour, determination and integrity. Their conviction for the things they believed in was unquestionable. They had high
expectations of others and in time learnt to have high expectations of themselves. Importantly, during their final years, they
learnt the enormous value of working hard and working together. They were experts at making use of their teachers, their time
and their peers.

I am immensely proud that every single girl was able to achieve their very best and that we nurtured, encouraged, guided and
loved their hearts, minds and souls. I would like to acknowledge and congratulate all 89 students of the class of 2019 for their
outstanding contributions to Camberwell Girls and to wish them all the very best in this new year.

Thank you