



open access
COLLEGE



STUDENT ACHIEVERS

of Open Access College

Inspirational role models & their stories | June 2018

STUDENT ACHIEVERS

of Open Access College

The students' stories contained here are a microcosm of all Open Access College students, and by celebrating this small selection of students we are acknowledging and celebrating the achievements of all students at Open Access College.

As you read the stories in this book you will be struck by the amazing achievements of each of these individuals. The one constant is that each of these students set themselves goals. The goals these students chose were individual, challenging, achievable, personally meaningful and future focused.

It was not an easy road to travel to achieve their goals, but because they were focused and determined they took every step and fall along the way as a learning experience, making them better learners, problem solvers and creative thinkers.

As you read, you'll notice that Open Access students often come from complex circumstances. Students may be isolated. They may be parents or carers – juggling work, family and study. They may have chronic illness. Or they may be travelling, with no fixed location.

All of our Student Achievers acknowledge that the flexible learning environment of Open Access College has enabled them to continue to study and achieve their goals.

We know that successes at Open Access College lay a solid foundation for future achievements, and we wish all students positive and rewarding futures.



**BROOKE
DURDIN**



**ERIN
HOOD**

**The Register of
Student Achievers**
celebrates all
Open Access
College students.
It acknowledges
their determination
and individuality
in achieving
their goals.



**NICOLA
MOYLE**



**JOSHUA
MURCOTT**



**ANNA
PICKARD**



**MAHAYLA
ROSE**



**KAYLA
SANCHEZ**



**EVANGELIA
WICHMANN**



**ANNA
WOJNAR**

**CON
GRAT
ULA
TIONS!**

BROOKE DURDIN



MY NAME IS BROOKE.

I live in a small town in the Riverland/Mallee Region called Paruna, 241 km from Adelaide. I completed my senior schooling at Loxton High School, approximately 35km from my home.

I am 17 years old. I live with my parents, brother and sister. I love fitness, and a healthy lifestyle, and enjoy playing netball.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

I started studying at Open Access in 2017, in my last year of study. I studied only one subject, nutrition, as my school did not offer this subject. I successfully completed this subject with great results.

Through studying with OAC, I further improved and developed new skills of independence and initiative that is not taught through the traditional education system. While I initially found it difficult to have limited face-to-face time, it allowed me to develop exceptional time management and organisational skills.

I found OAC completely different to a normal classroom, as class sizes are smaller, but this also makes it easier to ask in depth questions, and for the teacher to check up on each student individually, regularly.

The learning experience was something quite unexpected,

yet assisted in developing skills that no doubt also contributed to my success in other subjects. The staff are very friendly and helpful, and are always just an email away if you have any questions.

To make the most out of your study at OAC, make sure you allocate time to your subjects, and make sure you complete all your work before going to lessons. This ensures you can write down any questions you have prior to the lesson, so your teacher can assist you.

AND TODAY...

I have successfully completed Year 12, received my SACE, with an ATAR of 96.00. I am currently in a 'gap year' where I have gained a full-time traineeship, which I am enjoying thoroughly. After this, I hope to apply for the Police Academy.

ERIN HOOD



MY NAME IS ERIN.

In 2006, my parents decided that we would all benefit from being home-schooled, and mostly in the 'unschooled' manner.

I began volunteering in 2014 with my sister every Friday morning at age 13, at Meals on Wheels. She was going for her Queen's Scout award and needed a companion.

St John Cadet training began in 2015 and I'm working my way through the badges.

These activities have helped me have fun and gain solid work and life experience, as well as extra SACE points!

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

In 2016, my younger brother and I attended the Sydney Jamboree, paid for by busking on unicycles in 2014 and 2015. I want to be a firefighter or police officer and came to the view that a SACE certificate would be the best way to enable those type of employers to formally rank my suitability.

I considered attending school, but I wanted to continue volunteering as well as my ongoing busking and circus training (now fundraising for New Zealand Venture in 2019).

OAC was the only choice for my family! My sister went first and highly recommended it, and I could see for myself how she made it work, even though we often have internet issues.

AND TODAY...

Coming from an 'unschooled' life, it was a shock to my system starting in year 11, and I think I'm only now catching up with most of the basics that are required for a measure of success at year 12.

I have recommended to my brother that he start OAC in year 10. I am very glad I enrolled at OAC because the subjects I have chosen have all been useful and the class interactions have been great for keeping me focused.

The flexibility helped me pull it all together. A big thanks to my teacher who, upon hearing some of the things I do, recommended me for a Citizenship Award and I was lucky enough to gain an Order of Australia Association - Student Citizenship Award in 2017. OAC the cyber 'place' to be!

NICOLA MOYLE



MY NAME IS NICOLA.

I'm 17 years old and, for the most part, I live in the northern suburbs of Adelaide with my mum, step dad, brother and step sister.

On the weekends I head to my dad's house in the small town of Kadina, where he lives with my step mum and baby sister.

In my spare time you can usually find me with my friends, road-tripping in my little yellow Hyundai, listening to music and adventuring outdoors.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

I started my journey with OAC at the beginning of year 10 in 2016, after a long struggle with anxiety and attending mainstream school.

Learning with OAC has been such an amazing experience for me. It has helped me to become more independent, confident and organised.

The flexibility that the school provides lets me work part-time, study full-time and also have a lot of free time to see my friends who attend mainstream school.

I've become really involved with the school through Student Leaders, which is something I'd always wanted to do, but lacked the confidence.

I have achieved so much academically and gained

self-confidence, and I'm very proud of where I am today. The teachers at Open Access are all so supportive, understanding and motivated to help every single student achieve their goals.

This is really refreshing and something I have appreciated during the last few years.

AND TODAY...

I am beginning my Stage 2 studies with the goal of achieving my SACE and also a high ATAR. Although I'm not completely set on what I want to do after I complete Stage 2, I have the goal of going to university to possibly study Business Marketing.

I am so grateful for all the opportunities that OAC has provided me, and for making me love learning again. I never thought I'd say it, but I will really miss school when my time ends, because my experience was so good.

JOSHUA MURCOTT



MY NAME IS JOSHUA.

I am the youngest of four brothers living on a farm in Glencoe, SA, with my parents.

We work 600 acres with our cousins, with Poll Hereford beef cattle and White Suffolk sheep, and cats, chickens, and guinea fowls in the mix!

I have a myriad of pursuits which include playing music with my family, paintballing in the bush, farming (fencing, tractor work, and animal husbandry), and undertaking car mechanics on our 10+ Subarus.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

I first undertook studies through OAC whilst in Year 8 homeschooling, beginning with Spanish – a language with much flair and emotion that appealed to me.

This complemented my schooling by providing opportunities for language and culture that were not readily available on a farm; plus, with my love of languages and conscientious support from my Spanish teacher, I was able to form a stable commitment and passion towards my online lessons. In my final year 12 Spanish examination, I gained high grades.

I also completed PLP, Photography, Digital Image Manipulation, and Media Studies. In all, I had excellent teachers;

however, Spanish was my first and favourite.

Linguistics, I believe, is where Open Access excels: the nature of learning a language, while never easy, can be moulded for distance education; a fact epitomised by my excellent Spanish teacher and the class. *“¡Muchísimas gracias, maestra – eres fabulosa!”*

AND TODAY...

Having completed my scholastic studies, I intend to take a gap year (at least) and work as a Jackaroo on a number of cattle and sheep stations throughout Australia, from outback SA to central QLD.

I also have the opportunity of undertaking tertiary studies either in Agricultural Science or Management. Furthermore, I have an aspiration to travel to a Spanish-speaking country, such as Argentina. So, one day, I might find myself working as a gaucho, or cowboy, on the grazing plains of the Pampas... and it all began with Open Access College.

ANNA PICKARD



MY NAME IS ANNA.

I am nearly 16. I live in the northern suburbs of Adelaide with my parents, three sisters and one brother.

I enjoy spending time outside with my dog, a Cavalier King Charles called Honey. My hobbies include photography, knitting, and card making.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

I have had a fantastic experience at OAC.

Before I started, I was home-schooled except for a brief time when I attended a very small school. Since I had never been to high school I was a little bit nervous, but OAC has been amazing since I commenced year 10 full-time in 2017.

My 13 year old sister was diagnosed with Leukemia whilst I was midway through year 10 and my whole life was turned upside down. Things were crazy and nothing was certain. We had to move interstate for her medical treatment, and thanks to OAC I was able to continue my schooling.

Having one constant thing in life during an uncertain time was very helpful for me to cope.

My teachers were amazing, they supported me and helped me achieve my goal which was to complete year 10.

OAC is amazing when your life is hard or something goes wrong, the teachers are supportive and flexible – they want each person to succeed, and they encourage you along the way to success.

PLP in year 10 helped me to formulate goals, try new things, and challenged me to keep growing and succeeding.

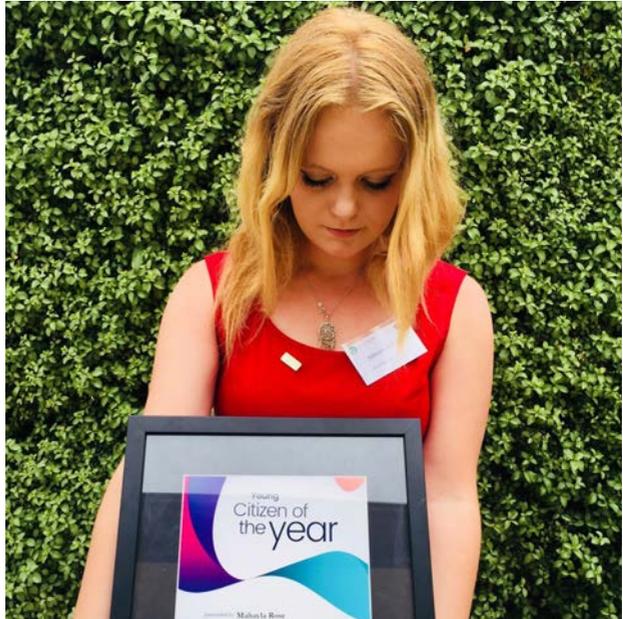
I have been interstate with my family supporting my sister for 4 months, and I don't know when we will go home.

AND TODAY...

My plan is to compete years 11 and 12 and then my Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. My dream is to work with children that have special needs, and thanks to OAC being flexible, I have already had volunteer experience working in this field.

I am so thankful to OAC for supporting me as I continue my schooling and enabling me to succeed.

MAHAYLA ROSE



MY NAME IS MAHAYLA.

I'm 17 years old, I live in a small town called Macclesfield in the Adelaide hills.

I was recently awarded the Young Citizen of the Year Award for 2018 and was a baton-bearer for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

I'm extremely passionate about raising money for cancer research, due to losing my nanna to brain cancer in 2014.

Since then I have been fundraising for cancer and am close to raising a total of \$30,000.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

I began studying OAC in year 7, learning Japanese. The following year I continued Japanese and started music and guitar lessons.

I continued Music into year 9. Year 10 was my first full year with OAC. It was quite stressful at the start, learning to manage homework and lesson schedules. However, throughout the year I learnt to better manage my time, and then began donating my spare time to fundraising for cancer.

I found Stage 1 a lot less stressful once I learnt to work around problems and schedules, and I worked hard to receive the marks I aimed for.

Having the support from my counsellor throughout year 11 was an amazing help. Thanks to him, I was able to kick start the pathway into my future career of becoming a veterinary nurse, by studying my Certificate II in Animal Care.

TODAY...

I'm now in my final year of schooling and studying my Certificate III in Animal Studies, along with the subjects to complete my sace.

I aim to reach my goal of \$50,000 raised for cancer by the end of the school year along with my goal to become employed in a veterinary clinic or animal care facility.

KAYLA SANCHEZ



MY NAME IS KAYLA.

I'm eighteen years old and currently living with my family in the southern suburbs of Adelaide. I recently graduated year 12 at Southern Vales Christian College.

A few ways I love to spend my time include reading, learning new languages and gardening.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

What prompted me to join OAC was my growing interest in Japanese Studies – a subject which was unavailable at my own school.

With tremendous convenience and flexibility, OAC enabled me to pursue my interests in this topic and commence Japanese alongside my other studies at Southern Vales, in the latter half of 2014.

I continued with Japanese Studies all throughout my secondary education and had the immense pleasure of being taught by a wonderful teacher whose lessons were consistently engaging and accommodating.

I was making much better progress with Open Access College than the year or so that I tackled Japanese on my own.

When it came to year 12, I found the ability to adapt OAC around studies at Southern Vales particularly useful.

This malleability, I believe, is largely responsible for my success during my senior year.

AND TODAY...

Achieving an ATAR of 98.80, I am now moving on to completing a Bachelor of Arts for High Achievers at Flinders University where I will study English, French and Applied Linguistics.

I am still unsure where this will take me but I am looking forward to the opportunities it may bring.

If it hadn't been for OAC, I would have never been able to follow my passion for foreign languages and, quite likely, become the person I am today.

EVANGELIA WICHMANN



MY NAME IS EVANGELIA.

I am in Year 12 this year at Tenison Woods College, Mount Gambier.

In 2006 I moved to Australia from Munich, Germany with my two older siblings and my parents.

After school, other than doing homework, I spend my time dancing and acting,

as well as debating, cooking, playing instruments and spending time with our animals.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC...

Speaking German at home with the family, my parents wanted me to complete Stage 2 German not only to get a better understanding of the grammar but also to keep my options open after year 12.

I started studying German Continuers at OAC in year 9. Schools in the region didn't offer German Continuers as a subject so it was a great opportunity for me and my siblings.

The flexible time tables and clear course structure made my learning very stress-free and the easy and clear communication between students and teachers made it very enjoyable.

Studying German outside of my school was sometimes difficult, mainly because I had more homework.

I really enjoyed my Open Access experience, my teacher was

amazing and my classmates were all really friendly, many of us being in the same position and with similar backgrounds.

AND TODAY...

This year, I have started my last year of school. I have a range of interests that I really enjoy.

After completing school, I would love to become an actress. It has been a dream of mine since I was about 5 years old, but knowing about the small chances of having a stable job in this industry, I keep my options open with my year 12 subjects.

Before I start studying again and attend auditions, I am planning to go to France in 2019 to work, travel and learn the language. French has always interested me and as I'm able to speak Italian, I hope it will help me learn the new language reasonably fast.

I'd also consider spending a year away from Australia and to see some more parts of Europe on my own.

ANNA WOJNAR



MY NAME IS ANNA.

I am 26 years old. I live with my parents and brother in the Adelaide Hills of South Australia.

Because I have a severe disability called Morquio, to be able to get the most out of learning it was necessary to do my education through correspondence.

MY EXPERIENCE AT OAC... AND TODAY...

I started at Open Access College in 2012 and was slowly working towards my SACE.

OAC was great, as it was tailored to my needs and my teachers were great in being able to give me extra support outside of lesson time.

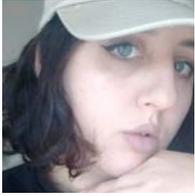
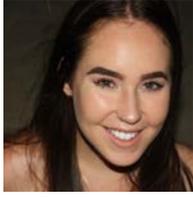
This flexibility allowed me to also concentrate on my health needs, like; being able to see all my specialists, continue my exercises and any rest that my body required.

Because of all the health complications, I surprised myself that I was able to complete my SACE and also receive a merit!

I couldn't have achieved this goal and beyond without the support and encouragement that the staff at OAC provided.

As of this moment I am proud of my accomplishments, but after working so hard for many years I am taking a break from studying. I am the human resources assistant at a busy bakery so I am far from bored.

Thank you to Open Access College. With my SACE behind me, it proves that even though I have a severe disability... with a bit of hard work, I can still achieve things in life.

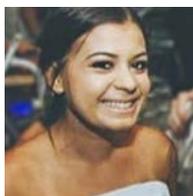


THANK YOU

A big thank you to all of our Student Achievers, for telling your story!

Whether you are continuing your studies with us or moving on, we wish you all the very best for the future.



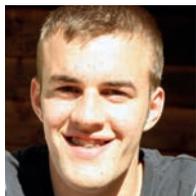


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Visit our website and Facebook page to read more about the individuals that make up our very special community.

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