

— CELEBRATING —

Our Students

2021



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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 our students.

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 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, but because they were focused and determined they took every step and misstep along the way as a learning experience, making them better learners, problem solvers and creative thinkers.

Many 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.

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San Francisco



Alberobello in Puglia

Chloe

I've been a student at OAC for 3 years now and I absolutely love this way of learning. It has been so helpful with my situation since my parents and I moved to Italy in 2019. All my teachers have been so understanding and supportive throughout it all. Right from the beginning, my teachers have always encouraged me to do my best and not overly stress over assignments, but take full advantage of living in another country and exploring its history and culture. This has really helped me set priorities, keep balance and make this experience more enjoyable.

Though I am unable to attend the live lessons because of the time difference, my teachers record each lesson and send it to me. That way by the time I wake up I have a lesson ready to watch and work ready to do. I've also really enjoyed having one different subject each day to work on. This helps me not only focus more on each assignment, but it has also helped me remember and learn so much!

Two of the main things that I have learnt while at OAC are the virtue of self discipline and the skill of communication.

It's not easy to have a routine of waking up to watch the lessons, then completing the assigned work and asking for help all from the comfort of your own home, but the teachers are so good

and understanding and always offer to help with anything as they have our best interests at heart.

The subject selection that OAC offers covers a range of topics which has been great since it has enabled me to select subjects I am interested in, as well as ones I would have never thought I would choose and enjoy.

It has really broadened my options for the future and has opened my eyes to interests I never had before. Some being, a passion for food photography, a love of exploring new places and learning about new cultures, has brought out the creative side of me which I never knew I had.

Because of all this, I've even been able to create an Instagram account called "Chocolateandfigs" to express my love of cooking, photography and exploring.

Overall, OAC has been a great experience and a great way of learning and I'm looking forward to continuing my studies with them. Thank you to all my teachers who have helped me and supported me so far, it has really made this experience that much more enjoyable and couldn't of done it without you.

Jay

Jay is a Curriculum Choice student who has demonstrated a great deal of passion and commitment to his art. This was on display when he travelled 4 hours to attend our Art Come in Day in early 2021. His dedication paid off earlier in the year when he received first place in the Youth 13-16 category in the Kangaroo Island Easter Art Exhibition On The Edge.



The prize-winning artwork was created for his SACE Visual Study, where Jay has been exploring the techniques and style of Australian artist Reg Mobassa.

Jay said of his learning experience with OAC:

"I came to enrol at the OAC due to a clash with my other face-to-face lessons at school. I had been planning to Study Visual arts in Stage 1 for a few years - OAC enabled me to do so. I find that studying via WebEx can be challenging at times as it was something completely new to me and I didn't get that face-to-face communication with my teacher however this was made up for with easy communication and a supportive attitude.

"Working online has also enabled me to attend class at times where I usually would not have, such as when I am unwell. I think that meeting new people and learning from that will benefit my overall confidence and willingness to communicate."



YOUTH 13-16 y

First Prize
Youth 13-16 Years
International Art Exhibition



200

Jay with his winning artwork

Diana

I began studying with Open Access in Year 12, as I chose to push myself to do a subject I had a passion for that my high school did not offer. Initially, I found studying online quite difficult, as for 13 years, I had studied in a typical classroom environment.

As COVID-19 hit and started to disrupt the possible outcome of the year, having the skills to study independently and online came in handy. Looking in retrospect, studying with Open Access changed me as a student and as a future educator.

I learnt to trust myself when others doubt you, whether that's a teacher saying they don't think that your idea for an assignment could work or it's a future employer doubting if you would fit into a role.

I learnt that thinking out of the box can sometimes be beneficial, whether that is picking a less common topic for an assignment or doing an assignment in a unique form to your classmates.

For me, the assignments I was passionate about, due to picking elements that I connected with and stuck with my gut, were the assignments that I had the greatest success with.

Through my studies at Open Access, I was fortunate to be the Leila Rankine Award for Excellence recipient for the class of 2020 – for the highest achieving student for Stage 2 Aboriginal Studies.

For me, receiving this award meant that all the work that occurred during the year had paid dividends. I took a big step out of my comfort zone by persevering to do an external subject and the award was the icing on the cake of my personal development.

My passion for Aboriginal Studies has now carried over to my studies to become a teacher, with my main specialisation being History, subspecialising in Australian History.

Receiving the Leila Rankine award, as one of only two Indigenous students to be awarded it in the last few years, meant that I proved that all you need to succeed in a subject is a deep passion and a bit of grit and perseverance.



Jemimah

In 2021, year 10 student Jemimah won the annual Young Writer's Award in the Mental Health Foundation for Youth Creative Writing Competition – Senior Secondary Category for South Australia.

Jemimah won a prize and an invitation to the official launch of National Mental Health Month SA at Parliament House.

The award was for Jemimah's story *Paper Planes and Cuddles* - a version of which was published in the first issue of the Open Access College student-managed publication, the Access Gazette.

When asked about her experience learning with Open Access College, Jemimah told us this:

"I started OAC in Year 9, but only did 2 subjects: Music and Spanish. In 2021 I did OAC full time. I started OAC to do Year 10, 11 and 12 and gain my SACE credit.

"My experience studying online so far has been great. I love all my teachers. They are very supportive and helpful when I have questions or when I don't understand the homework. OAC has helped me gain friends for life, including My Best Friends Jacinta, Rahab, and Mikayla.

"I love to read and write. My English teacher Katie helped me enter in the Young Writers competition, where I had to write a short story about Mental

Health. I really didn't think I would win, I'm a year 10 in the category with year 11s and 12s. Surprisingly I won.

"The inspiration for my story came from an idea I had one night and when I started putting the idea together the words started flowing out. My story was published in the first issue of the Gazette with a little tweak to the ending. It took me about a day to write out my story after I came up with the idea.

"I got to go to the Parliament House in the city to collect my award. I was extremely nervous and sure that I would muck up going to Parliament. However afterwards I felt so excited. Having to go into Parliament to accept the award was a unique experience. It was very fun and afterwards Assistant Minister Jing Lee showed me around the library. I love libraries."

Read Jemimah's story in the Gazette by visiting oac.direct/gazette



Jemimah receiving her award at Government House

CERTIFICATE
OF APPRECIATION

What our teachers had to say...

OAC students Alex and Tarah made a big impression on their teachers in 2021.

about Alex

Alex was a year 10 student in 2021, who had been with OAC since the beginning of the year. Open Access College teachers had been very impressed with how Alex is negotiating the sometimes tricky life of online learning, and the efforts she has made.

Alex joins many other students in going out of her comfort zone by participating in OAC groups, engaging with teachers and students in class and letting her personality shine through.

Matt said:

"In term 1 Alex successfully engaged in the Bounce excursion for year 10's. She had a great time participating in the event and interacting with the other students."

Laurence said:

"Alex turned her camera on in Music and was very vocal. It was one of the rare occasions that students turned their cameras on and I was pleasantly surprised that Alex did as well. Also, since in lockdown she has participated in a few optional online groups."

about Tarah

Tarah came to Open Access College at the beginning of 2021. Since arriving she has consistently impressed her class teachers - here is what they had to say about her achievements.

Nicole said:

"Tarah joined our TLC class in Term 1 and despite being understandably nervous she quickly established herself as a friendly and trusted member of our class who all students look up to.

"She's adapted well to a dynamic and ever-evolving cohort of students and treats everyone with respect and dignity. She is a gentle presence in the class and listens to other students about their interests and has formed positive relationships with all members of the class.

"In Term 3 Tarah set herself a personal goal, to turn her camera on in her 1:1 Literacy Support Lessons. Rather than just achieving this goal, she took it one step further and surprised us all. She turned her camera on to share some photos with a new student to our class.

"She should be very proud of her achievements and reflect on them as a source of motivation for future academic and personal goals."

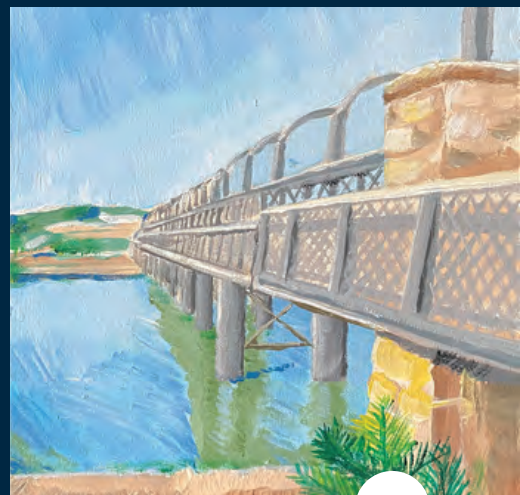
Kieran said:

"Tarah has consistently impressed me with her positive outlook and willingness to challenge herself. I have seen Tarah develop significantly this year, overcoming academic barriers, life challenges, and pushing herself out of her comfort zone.

"She remains the only student I have ever had who suggested and then organised a second lesson time each week because she enjoyed the first so much. This attitude, and her friendly, bright personality will serve her very well into the future."

Artists of OAC

'Tiny Art' Exhibition



a



Students in years 7-12 were invited to submit artworks to suit the theme of 'Tiny Art' for consideration for this South Australian Living Artists (SALA) Festival exhibition.

'Tiny Art' means that all of the artworks were under 20x20cm in size, some were only 3cm tall!

The artworks were on display at Kicco Café in the Marden Shopping Centre for all of August 2021.

Over 230 votes were received from the public for the People's Choice Award. Two other prizes were awarded - the Kicco's Choice voted on by the staff at Kicco's, and the Teacher's Choice voted on by staff at OAC.

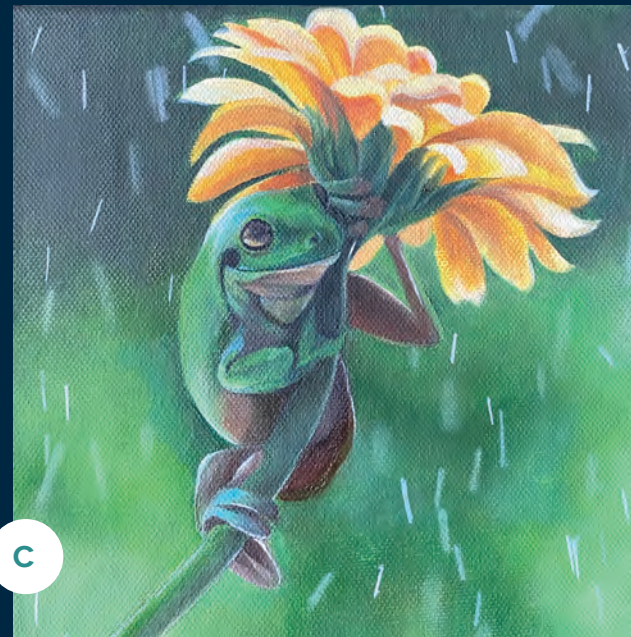


Winning artworks

(a) Teacher's Choice Award: Elysia

(b) People's Choice Award: Mary

(c) Kicco's Choice Award: Alisla



Artists of OAC

Happy Holidays

Art Competition

"What do the holidays mean to you?"

Students in all year levels were invited to submit an artwork in the medium of their choice during Term 4. Dozens of entries were received, the winners shown here were voted by OAC staff.





This page, above: Christmas shoes by Max, year 6;
Right: *Santa Claus is Coming To Town* by Jacinta, year 10.



Opposite page, clockwise from top: *Christmas Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat* by Charlotte, year 10;
Happy Mid-Autumn Festival by Catherine, year 1;
An Ocean of Christmas Fun by Mei, year 8.

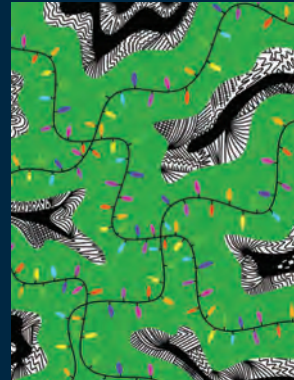
Principal's Award

These artworks were
chosen by the Principal to
be made into greeting cards
for the college. Left to right:

Christmas Night
by Mariella, year 8;

A Cracking Good Time
by Georgia, year 11;

Tangled Lights
by Nikyta, year 10



Student Leaders



Danica, left, and Tamsyn during their speech

Danica and Tamsyn address the college community as part of the 2021 Awards Ceremony, presented virtually on 2 December.

Tamsyn: I joined Open Access college at the beginning of year 10 in 2019. Before OAC I was homeschooled and was very nervous when it came to socialising with other people. I can very vividly remember my first lesson. I was rather timid and I remember my brother setting up my headset, giving me the good old double thumbs up and leaving me to it. Even though my hands refused to stop shaking, my teacher made me feel very welcome and all my teachers have continued to do so for all my years here. I personally found the environment both online and face to face to be a great confidence booster, and I'm very proud of how I've grown and how I've seen other people around me take steps towards their futures.

Danica: I began at OAC in mid 2019. I was struggling with my mental health and grades at my current school and Open Access was the perfect option

for me. When I began at Open Access, I no longer had to face bullying or an incompatible environment. Open Access is an incredible school that works so personally with all students to support their learning and their health. I can say truthfully that this school actually teaches alongside their motto "Every Learner, Every Way." I don't know where I would be without this school, my mental health is now much more positive and my grades moved from almost failing to almost straight As. The teachers at Open Access are so special, my favourite aspect of this school is that every teacher is always ready and happy to take the time out of their day to make sure you are okay. I think almost every teacher I have had at Open Access has spent extra, one on one time outside of class with me talking me through my upcoming assignments and nerves whenever I needed it. This amazed me because I was so used to teachers from face to face schools not understanding or knowing how to support students with unique needs, whereas Open Access teachers do this without having to try.

Tamsyn: Despite the pandemic, OAC has still been able to offer face to face opportunities for students to come together, meet and make connections with each other.

One of the events that we were lucky enough to enjoy this year was the school Formal. It was an enchanted forest theme and was loads of fun. One of the highlights was meeting other students face to face for the first time. By the end of the night we were singing, taking photos with each other and exchanging details as if we'd been friends for ages. I believe that as many students are primarily online, face to face events like the Formal and Come In Days are really nice because you get to meet new people and put faces to names that you already know from your lessons.

Danica: Everyone had a great time at the Formal but the pandemic did have an effect on the event and other aspects of the year. I know that a lot of students may have felt anxious because of what is going on in the world around us and worried about the effect this could have on our learning and future. I believe our community at Open Access has shown great resilience. This school works so hard to keep a positive outlook no matter what, as could be seen by the happy, covid-safe chair dancing at Formal. Students at Open Access were extremely lucky to already be confident online and continue with our learning uninterrupted through this pandemic. I think having a strong community with an unrelenting positive attitude really helped me and other students develop and maintain persistence during these difficult times.

Tamsyn: At the beginning of year 12 I found that many of my teachers recommended that I should begin a lot of my projects and assignments early. That way you can get it done in pieces rather than having to quickly start and finish assignments the week before. Trust me, as someone who did rush at least two of her assignments, I felt a lot more proud and confident in my work if I gave myself enough time to do it.

Danica: My advice to students going into year 12 at Open Access would be to make use of the amazing teachers. They are always so easy to contact and will find a way to solve your problems and help you out. Don't be afraid to talk to them, no question is a bad one at this school and I have never felt judged by any of my teachers. Also, make sure to speak up in class! You will get so much more out of your experience if you talk and it only takes one person speaking up to encourage the entire class to start sharing their ideas. This creates a much more fun learning environment for everyone.

Tamsyn: All of you should feel extremely proud of all your successes, no matter how small they seem to others, each step is an advancement to your future.

Danica: Congratulations to all year 12s graduating we wish all the best to past, present and future students at OAC.

Watch the 2021 Awards Ceremony at
openaccess.edu.au/awards2021

Major Award winners

Major Awards were presented at the College in a small ceremony at the end of 2021, and celebrated in our virtual Awards Ceremony on December 2.

Watch at openaccess.edu.au/awards2021

Outstanding Academic Achievement Awards

These students excelled academically and received multiple academic subject awards in 2021.

Year 10 award: Alisla

Stage 1 award: Emma

Stage 2 award: Daniel

Outstanding Personal Achievement Awards

These students made significant personal progress in their studies and showed consistent effort across several subjects in 2021.

year 10 award: Ashanti

Stage 1 award: Mitchell

Stage 2 award: Libby

Aboriginal Student Achiever Awards

Two awards are presented to students for a high level of academic or personal achievement in their studies, and for community or school involvement.

Aboriginal Student Achiever Award: Kayla

Kayla has a wide range of talents, along with curiosity and a willingness to explore. She is a very well-rounded person with a lot to offer. Whatever she decides to do, she will do it with excitement and enthusiasm.

Aboriginal Student Achiever Award: Kristen

Kristen is a very capable student, and her sheer determination despite all of the obstacles that she has encountered this year has seen her truly succeed. She shows an enviable level of dedication to always do her best.

The ADF Future Innovators Award

This award recognises innovation and motivation in the learning area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, along with the display of strong personal ethics such as doing one's best.

Year 10 Future Innovators Award: Noah

Noah is an enthusiastic and committed student, with a mind for engineering. He displays great personal ethics by championing the work of others, and he is a real team player. He isn't afraid to take risks to advance his skills, and his work in Mechatronics has been particularly impressive.

ADF Long Tan Leadership and Teamwork Awards

Students must display the attributes of leadership, teamwork, values, problem solving, resourcefulness, communication, cooperation and community involvement.

Year 10 Long Tan Award: Rahab

Rae impressed her teachers with her eager and proactive approach to her studies. She demonstrated a mature willingness to seek out and accept feedback and made the transition from home schooling to a formal education easily. She is highly motivated and was an active and enthusiastic participant in the Duke of Edinburgh award, demonstrating a commitment to the community and the service of others.

Year 12 Long Tan Award: Sarah

Sarah displayed highly developed problem solving skills and resourcefulness. She has a great ability to learn independently, and constantly strives for growth. She is adept at communicating her thought processes and showed impressive dedication and resilience through 2021.

Ampol Best All Rounder Award

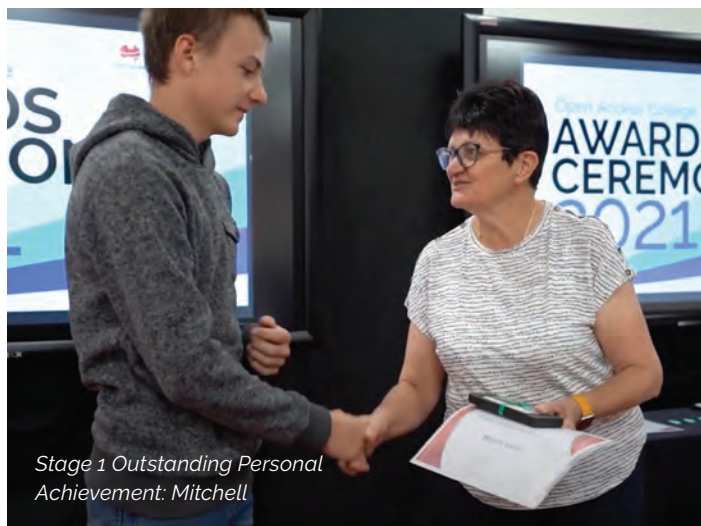
This is awarded to a student who excels in the key categories of: Academic, Attitude, Personal Conduct, Leadership and Service

Ampol Best All Rounder for 2021: Tamsyn

Tamsyn is a consistent high achiever academically. She demonstrated a willingness to participate and contribute, not just in her classes but to the community as well. She was an active participant in the Student Leaders group over several years and took part in face-to-face events often. Her positive attitude is appreciated by everyone around her, and she always displays generosity in her interactions with others.



Year 10 Long Tan Award: Rahab



Stage 1 Outstanding Personal Achievement: Mitchell



Major Awards Presentation at Marden campus

Student Performers

Our 2021 Virtual Awards Ceremony featured four very talented students performing.

Clockwise, from top left:

Esther, year 10 performed 'Stuff and Nonsense' by Missy Higgins.



Charlotte, year 9 performed 'Million To One' by Camila Cabello.



Maisy, year 9, performed 'She Used To Be Mine' from the musical Waitress.



Paige performed an equestrian vaulting routine accompanied by 'Dude' the horse.

Watch the 2021 Awards Ceremony at openaccess.edu.au/awards2021

Celebrating the students of Open Access College!



At OAC we celebrate all types of achievement!

Achievement is not just about academic results, it could mean perseverance in the face of challenges, or stepping outside of a comfort zone... or helping others and contributing to community. It could mean extra-curricular achievement in sport or the arts. Our unique students should to be celebrated, so please let us know who they are!

If you know of a student enrolled in 2022 who deserves to be acknowledged and celebrated for achievements uniquely their own – and included in the next issue of this publication – please contact Robyn.Allen40@schools.sa.edu.au



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Government of South Australia
Department for Education