College News

AUTUMN/WINTER EDITION 2021



STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

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Welcome

A new year has begun in earnest and everyone is settling back into the swing of college life. We have farewelled a couple of past students and are looking forward to welcoming a few more. The friendships that our students are developing are really wonderful to watch, as is the way our students grow in confidence the longer they spend here. Discovering who you are and what you want from this life is not an easy thing. I feel blessed every day to be able to watch the growth of our students and join in on their laughter and tears.

Karen Caldwell,
Pathways Training Principal



Mark your calendars!

JUNE.....
25th - End of Term Disco (Day and Online students)
28th - June/July break begins

JULY .....
24th - STEPS Grand Winter Ball 2021, presented Evans Long

SEPTEMBER.....
22nd - End of Term Disco (Day and Online students)
27th - Sept/Oct break begins



More life changing opportunities after new extension

We recently celebrated the official opening of the STEPS Pathways College Extension, opened by the Minister for the NDIS, Stuart Robert MP.

Due to immense demand, the College undertook three extensions: two new accommodation facilities and one new recreational area.

The recreational area, known as "Mason's place", provides an all-weather sanctuary for the students, where they can relax, socialise, and further their education.

The two accommodation facilities, one of which is named "The Mills Family Wing", extend the STEPS Pathways College experience to a further twelve students.

Stuart Robert MP, sung praises for the College in his official opening, specifically adding the importance of the STEPS Pathways College online program.

"What we are seeing here with STEPS is a world-leading model," Mr. Robert said.

"This is why it is so wonderful to see the online program that STEPS Pathways College is running here, so that people with disabilities have the opportunity to engage regardless of where they live.

"Together, as STEPS is showing, we can do profoundly great things in our community."

PICTURED HEADLINE: (L-R) Stuart Robert MP, Carmel Crouch, and Andrew Wallace MP at the official opening.

PICTURED ABOVE: Modern living areas available in newly built STEPS Pathways College accommodation.

Steps for STEPS

Blink and you'll miss them! Did you see our students powering around the community for Steps for STEPS?

The fundraising walk saw radio hosts Mark and Caroline from 92.7 MIX FM walk alongside our students to raise awareness for STEPS Pathways College and the brilliant students we have.

Our students also took the time to raise vital funds for STEPS Charity, with every cent going towards creating brighter futures for young people living with a disability and autism.

Everyone had a great day, and we were so pleased to be met with such great support in the community.

One of the students, Grace, shared what the event meant to her.

"I enjoyed walking with my friends and exploring more of Caloundra," Grace said.

"I love that I get to meet new people at the College and that I am encouraged to do more.

"That's why I'm here and it's great to be able to raise money to help others do that too."

A huge congratulations goes to all the students who participated in the walk, as well as to the rest of the students who supported them along the way!

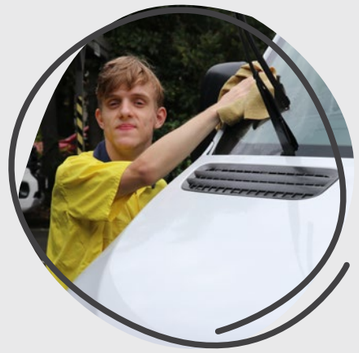
We would also like to thank every person who donated their time, energy, or funds to help support our students; we're incredibly grateful.

PICTURED BELOW: (L-R) Students Grace and Jordan with Caroline and Mark from 92.7 MIX FM.









Caelan's drive for success

Caelan has big dreams in the automotive industry.

Known for having an encyclopaedic knowledge of all things cars and racing, Caelan wants to one day be an automotive journalist.

Having been with the College for six months so far, Caelan is already pursuing his goals through practical elements of his College learning.

Caelan is currently undertaking work experience with STEPS Car Detailing.

"I really like it, I'll be working at the Car Detailing until I graduate," Caelan said.

"After I graduate, I'll be looking at probably doing a TAFE course, likely a Cert III in automotive mechanics."

From there, Caelan would like to "get into mechanics" before later striving for his dream role in automotive journalism.

Caelan's knowledge and passion is equally appreciated by his team, with the Car Program Coordinator Chris Rodgers raving about Caelan's work.

"Caelan has displayed a great work ethic and he has learnt the skills quickly," Mr. Rodgers said.

"STEPS Pathways College is doing a fantastic job with Caelan and we are seeing the benefit of his experience."

PICTURED: Caelan cleaning a vehicle with STEPS Car Detailing.



Final Step... Graduation!!

STEPS Pathways College celebrated the graduation of another group of brillant students.

The students capped off their College experience as they dressed up and walked across the stage, proudly receiving their certificates from Andrew Wallace MP, Member for Fisher.

The experience was also beautifully summarised by one of the graduates, Kate-Lyn Mackenzie, who delivered a powerful speech about how STEPS Pathways College has changed her life.

"I've learned so much and I can do so much more now," Kate-Lyn said.

"To all future students of our College, be brave, chase your dreams and never give up. You are so capable," she added.

Kate-Lyn and the other graduates will be joining the growing group of STEPS Pathways College alumni, young adults with disabilities and autism who now live independent and rewarding lives in the community.

The graduation was attended by many proud parents, relatives, and staffers; though the proudest person in the room was no doubt STEPS Pathways College founder, Carmel Crouch.

Ms. Crouch's initial motivation for the College was to create a space that would drastically change the standard of living for young adults with a disability and autism.

"We've had the special privilege of being alongside these students in every step of their journey," Ms. Crouch said.

"Each one of them is unique in their own way, and each have grown into amazing and capable individuals."

"I have no doubt that we will hear about all the great things they go on to achieve in our community and it is heart-warming to know that we were a part of getting them there."











We asked our graduates to find out...

What are your plans after college?



Melissa Louk

After graduation plans?
"I'm getting a job at a creche in the RSL, I'm working with children. I have done work experience in Cairns, I did volunteer work at a daycare centre. I'm also moving to live independently. I'm staying here in Caloundra; I'm living with Mitch."

What will you miss the most?
"Everything, everyone, especially Chef Brendan."



Sonya McFarlane

After graduation plans?
"After I graduate, I would like to work in a nightclub, disco, or restaurant. An Italian restaurant would be great. I would like to work at night-time, I love night-time. But the first thing I'm going to do is visit my family in Brisbane."

What will you miss the most?
"I'm going to miss everyone; I'll miss my principals a lot, especially Carmel."



Kate-Lyn MacKenzie

After graduation plans?
"The big goal is getting a new place. I'm also continuing my dancing every week, which I just started. I'm also looking at a few job opportunities, I would love to work in a café."

What will you miss most?
"I'll miss all my friends and the teachers. Mostly, I'll miss being a part of STEPS."



Mitchell Cavanagh

What are your plans after graduation? "At the moment, I'm really concentrating on getting healthy. For long term goals, I would love to go to flight school. I am working with STEPS Employment at the moment to seek a job but I'm studying [piloting] in my spare time and I would love to go in that direction."

What will you miss most about the College? "I'll miss the trainers, I'll miss interacting with them. Everyone at the College is really nice."



Alana Pettigrew

After graduation plans?
"After I graduate, I want to become a journalist. I can't wait until I write something down on paper and have it published."

What will you miss most?
"I will miss my friends Ari and Morgan; Ari is very beautiful and special. I will also miss sewing classes with Kim."



Alex Brown

After graduation plans?
"I'll be moving out of the College and moving in with Claire. I'm not sure what I want to do yet, but I do love the Cowboys NRL team. It'd be a dream to work for them."

What will you miss most?
"I'll miss my friends and I'll also miss Jason; I like him a lot."



Claire Robinson

After graduation plans?
"I'm not sure what I want to do. I have ridden horses since I was fifteen, I would love to work with horses if I could."

What will you miss most?
"I will miss my friends and my roommate, Jemma. She's sweet. I'll also miss the number one trainer, Jason."

Cooking in the kitchen with Chef Brendan...



Melting Moments

BISCUIT INGREDIENTS

230g Unsalted Butter

2 Cups Plain Flour

1/2 Cup Icing Sugar

4 Tablespoons Custard Powder

ICING INGREDIENTS

1/2 Cup Unsalted Butter

3 Cups Icing Sugar

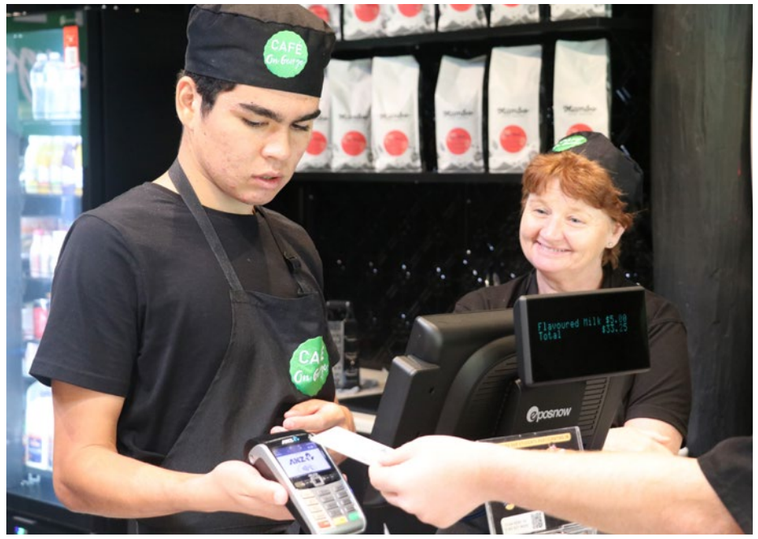
1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract

4 Tablespoons Milk

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees and line two baking trays with greaseproof paper.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter for 1 minute until creamy. Add flour, sugar and custard and beat until soft cookie dough forms.
3. Roll cookie dough in hands to form a ball and place on tray. When all rolled, press down with a fork and cook for approx. 12 minutes.
4. Prepare frosting by mixing all icing ingredients together.
5. Spread icing on cooled biscuits and join two together.

Enjoy!



We're open for business!

We are excited to share that the much-anticipated Café on George has opened on our Caloundra campus.

The fully functioning café gives our students the chance to practice their skills in a safe and encouraging environment. While at the café, our students also gain real world work experience that will assist them in obtaining employment after graduation, and in securing their life of independence.

Our students have practiced their social skills while serving customers, created warm coffees for our recent rainy days, and whipped up culinary delights with our freshly made sandwiches and wraps.



PICTURED HEADLINE: Daichi gaining valuable skills to become work-ready in Café on George

PICTURED SMALL: Erin along with Café Trainer Michelle.

Cooking Online



Our online students have been cooking up a storm Australia wide! From the very top of Queensland, all the way down to Tasmania - we have STEPS Pathways College online students tuning in all across Australia. One of our students, Isaac, recently filmed himself finding the best ingredients at a local supermarket before returning home to cook a mouthwatering meal with STEPS Pathways College Chef Brendan.



Celebrating Autism Awareness Month

Last month, we proudly celebrated Autism Awareness Month. During this time, we are invited to consider the barriers that people with autism face, and how we can help make a more inclusive Australia for all.

We were incredibly proud to have one of our day students, Jessica Finn, bravely step forward to share her experience with the Australian media. Jessica's insights proved popular, with her story being published across all of Australia and even in the US.

Jessica shared the importance of accurate representation in the media and highlighting all that people with autism can and have achieved.

"I'm excited to see what happens when we start to give more people a chance."



Jessica also shared her great passion for art with the media. PICTURED ABOVE: A recent drawing by Jessica (inset photo above).

"We're not unintelligent, I've seen that shown in media a lot," Jessica shared.

"People make movies about us and they will make us look like we're so incapable.

Jessica specifically credits STEPS Pathways College as a huge part of her journey, adding that the College is a "safe place" for everyone.



Every year, Autism Awareness Day is observed on the 2nd of April, with Autism Awareness Month celebrated across the entirety of April. In this month, we are reminded to ensure that we are actively pursuing an inclusive and supportive environment for all abilities in Australia, not just in April, but all year-round.



Melissa soars to success

In Melissa's first year at STEPS Pathways College, she was voted by her classmates and trainers as the "most likely to move to a big city".

After two years at the College, that prediction is coming true as Melissa graduates into her life of independence.

Originally from Cairns, Melissa is now packing up her belongings and moving out from her family home to live independently on the Sunshine Coast.

Melissa's time at the College has also helped her become confident in what she wants to do in the future – work with children.

Utilising the life skills she has learned at the College, Melissa has gotten a job at the local RSL.

"I'm getting a job at a creche in the RSL, I'll be working with children," Melissa said.

"STEPS Pathways College has given me an opportunity to live independently; I'm very happy now."

"I am so grateful to have been able to come to STEPS Pathways College and learn."

PICTURED: Melissa proudly receiving her certificate from Andrew Wallace MP, Member for Fisher.

LIVE & LEARN ON CAMPUS AS A *Boarding student*

In addition to learning core independent living skills, students take part in pathways to employment through training, work experiences, and volunteering. Boarding students live on campus in modern two and three bedroom apartments where they enjoy the privacy of their own bedroom, bathroom and patio, and share a living room, kitchen, and outdoor entertainment area, as well as a range of on campus facilities.

STEPS Pathways College now has places available for boarding students.

To find out more or to secure your spot, contact (07) 5458 3000 today.



LEARNING SKILLS FOR A *life of independence*

HELPING YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH DISABILITY AND AUTISM GAIN A LIFETIME OF INDEPENDENCE

STEPS PATHWAYS COLLEGE

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