As we approach the end of the year, I can’t help but reflect upon how quickly time flies, reminding myself once again as I do quite regularly, to make the most of the smaller moments that make up this time. It has been a busy year for everyone, and one in which we have achieved a lot – as a College, as Learning Community teams and as individuals.

In 2015, we will be one college united on one site! It has been a long wait for some but one that has been worth the wait. The 2015 Year 7 Orientation Day was held in the Middle Years Red building with students enjoying the learning spaces and the outlook. The 2015 Year 10 students held their first assembly to begin their Transition Program in the VCE Centre. Our facilities are absolutely amazing, with most staff now on site in their new spaces. It doesn’t matter who I take through the new buildings, everyone agrees that they are fantastic. The government has invested strongly in the education of the young people in this area and it is your children, our students, who are the current recipients of this investment. We plan to make the most of this and enjoy it in 2015 and beyond!

I take this opportunity to thank you and to congratulate everyone who has made a contribution to Western Heights College, whether as a student, a parent, or a staff member. This college is in a fantastic position and we are very proud of what has been achieved this year particularly, continuing to build on past successes.

I would like to acknowledge all of our students. We have made opportunities throughout the year to celebrate their successes; during the Semester One Celebration of Success assembly, our College, Learning Community and Campus assemblies, through certificates to acknowledge their high levels of attendance and at the upcoming End of Year Awards Ceremony. We have farewelled our 2014 Year 12 students at the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony recently and welcomed our 2015 Year 7 students into the college during the Orientation Day held earlier in the week. It is an absolute pleasure to be involved with our younger generation; our future world is in good hands!

I take this opportunity to recognise Western Heights College staff who are tireless in their efforts to focus on our students, to push them to excel and to support and care for them along the way. This year we have fulfilled an enhanced focus on student learning and achievement, with the belief staff have in our students, supporting them to achieve success in their current learning as they prepare for their future pathway.

My thanks and acknowledgement is also extended to members of our College Council, under the leadership of our College Council President, George Taylor. We have a fantastic group of parents, staff and community members who have the best interests of our college at heart. It is our College Council members who reflect on the progress we are making as a college, offering their guidance, expertise and support to ensure that we continue to excel and improve.

I wish you all a very safe, happy and enjoyable Christmas break. Thank you for your support during 2014 and I look forward to continuing to work with you during 2015; one college united on one site!
YEAR 8, YES WE ARE ALL READY!!

I would like to thank all students for their contribution to our Learning Community this year. As the year has unfolded, we have set higher expectations and the Year 7 students have certainly risen their effort and met these expectations. Year 7 students have been on time, ready to learn, wearing their uniforms with pride and they have kept this up all year. Many have achieved their learning goals over the year, some have exceeded their own expectations in what they have achieved and some have continued to strive to reach their goals.

We have seen a lot of growth, not only in academic results, however, also in student’s respect for everyone here, their environment and their approach to learning. It has been very rewarding for all staff in the Year 7 team this year to have shared the start of the journey of secondary schooling with these wonderful students.

2015 YEAR OF WRITING:
Year 7 students continued to work hard last week, improving their writing piece on ‘Stand By Me’ and what the characters in the movie meant to them.

The following introduction was written by:
Jye Burgess 7E.

‘Stand By Me’ is all about friendship.

Stand By Me is a beautiful story about a wonderful friendship developing. The friendship goes almost identical with any other friendships I’ve seen in my life. We have all been in emotional moments with each other, we all call each other names, and after a while, most friendships end. If we look close at Vern, Teddy, Chris and Gordie, we can see all of this happening.

SILVER SOAR AMBASSADORS - SILVER SCREEN REWARD:
Last Wednesday Mr Scott and I had a terrific outing with the Silver SOAR Ambassadors. Students who received silver SOAR status have reached 75 points or over. This is a truly amazing achievement. To recognise this, students selected a movie and we went to the most popular one – Hunger Games. Of course, all students represented Western Heights College with pride and did us all proud with their exemplary behaviour.

ON DEMAND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT & IMPROVEMENT:
It was a proud moment for many students who received their GOLD and/or SILVER awards for their On Demand Test results. Gold recipients were rewarded for achieving a high result, whilst Silver recipients had the most improvement when comparing their On Demand Testing.

Tami O’Hare, our College Associate Principal presented the awards. Well done to all students who received these awards for their hard work.

GOOD LUCK IN YEAR 8 AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS:
I would like to wish all students the very best in continuing their learning in Year 8 which starts this week in the Middle Years Blue building.

We look forward to celebrating the year with all students at Adventure Park next Monday, during the Activities Program.

On behalf of the Year 7 team, I would like to wish all students and their families a safe and relaxing holiday. We look forward to seeing you back next year, once again ready to learn and continue the journey.

Mrs Michelle Roth
Year 7 Learning Community Leader
We are encouraging and supporting the students to take a higher level of responsibility for their learning journey as it continues into 2015. Acknowledging that our students are all at differing points in this process is central to all students experiencing success. An essential element in taking more responsibility for their progress is the learning that occurs outside of the classroom. While your child may say they have no ‘homework’, we are continuing to support them to establish a sustainable home study routine. As a rule, students should be completing between 30 and 60 minutes per school night of private study. This can include:

- Revising what has been learned in class,
- Practicing newly acquired skills,
- Continuing research around a new concept or knowledge area,
- Ensuring they are prepared for due dates and in class assessments.

I wish to thank all the current Year 8 students for a terrific year, full of many memorable moments. I hope you all have a wonderful break over the holiday period and return ready to excel in Year 9.

Mrs Kelly Montano
Year 8 Learning Community Leader
GUEST SPEAKER:
Recently, Year 9 was fortunate to have inspirational speakers talk to our students. These speakers were Richard Coleman, a Paralympic gold medalist and world record holder and Tegan Caldwell, an Australian Diamond netball star. Both spoke to our students regarding commitment, dedication, sacrifice and goal setting. The speakers were both scholarship holders from the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS) and it was an exciting opportunity for our students to listen to and meet such high profile people who came from our local community. The visit from our local sports stars follows a visit to the VIS where students in the Year 9 ‘Fire up Fellas’ class toured the elite training facility earlier in November.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH CAMP:
On the 25 November, 24 of the Year 9 Duke of Ed students went to Aire River National Park for our 4 day end of year hiking trip. For the past 6 months we have been preparing for this trip by running on a weekly basis, learning level 1 first aid, developing our canoeing and hiking skills and our team building skills throughout several activities.

Before the trip we had to pack our hiking packs with the essentials that we needed such as, food, water, suitable clothing and footwear and also bedding. We left at about 9.30am on Tuesday morning, managing to flood the bus 10 minutes down the road, and arrived at our destination at around 3.00pm. Then we had to find a suitable area to set up our tents. We had to remember to look out for rocks, sticks, roots and other things that could interfere with our sleeping arrangements.

The following day we were split into 2 groups. Group 1 did a 26km hike whilst group 2 kayaked up Aire River. The next day the groups swapped activities. The hike was fun but still physically challenging, having to carry our packs with the food, water and clothing that we needed for that day. The kayaking was cold, raining and windy on the first day, unfortunately making it a difficult task for the group. The second day was sunny and warm, and unluckily a lot of students of got burnt.

Over the days we had to cook our own breakfast, lunch and dinner. A lot of students just had cereal for their breakfasts, sandwiches and or noodles for lunch and pasta for dinner.

During the trip we were allowed to roam freely around the national park which included destinations such as the beach. On the first night we discovered a cute and furry friend, a fat koala who hung around our campsite during our entire stay. We decided to call him Spencer. He was loud and crazy throughout the night.

Our first team work experience was an unexpected incident which occurred on the first night. A ‘Jucy’ rental van had mistakenly driven up a 4WD only road which led to the near by beach, causing them to get bogged in the sand. Working together we dug out the van and helped them successfully free the vehicle, after about 20 minutes of working as a team.

We think the overall experience, was a great team building exercise and we all feel we have gone out of our comfort zone at some stage and got to know different people better.

We would like to thank Mr Greenhalgh for setting up the trip and making it an enjoyable experience. We have loved getting to know him over the past 12 months and also thank him for being a great Duke of Ed leader. We would also like to thank Ms Gaito and Mark for being a part of our Duke of Ed team. We would also like to give a special shout out to Ms Gaito for sharing with us her Canadian ways by teaching us how to make s’mores. They were delicious! We all can’t wait until next year!

By Tanisha, Siobhan, Gemma & Lara
Year 9 Duke of Ed Students
Year 10 students and staff enjoyed a fabulous evening at Capri Receptions celebrating their success in 2014.

Dinner, Photo booth and Dancing the night away – students looked amazing and enjoyed every moment!
Congratulations to the 2014 Year 10 students for a fantastic effort over the last two weeks of their term. During the period they completed their exams with high attendance and success. This exam period has been of significant experience, preparing them for Year 11 and 12 exams in the future.

The Year 11 Transition Program was another very successful experience for the 2015 Year 11 students. It was very pleasing to see the way they approached their new classes. All students will have PREP for these classes to complete over the holidays.

The Year 10 Formal, what a fantastic night. A Big thank you to Mrs Kerrie Hutchinson for her efforts. Well done to the Year 10 students who were involved in the organisation of the night.

Have a Happy and safe holiday, returning rested and energised for a fantastic 2015. Thank you from all the Year 10 staff for an excellent year and wishing you every success in your future pathways.

Mr. Roger Conron
Year 10 Learning Community Leader

Last week I reflected on some of the great things that the Year 11 students and team did through 2014. Again, I would like to thank the students for their work this year and the parents for your support. I also feel that I should again acknowledge the work done this year by the Year 11 team: Mrs Miriam Day, Mr Adrian McCall, Mrs Leanne Jemmett, Mr Farid Anawati, Ms Amber Spencer, Mrs Fiona Hergstrom and Ms Anna Hurley. As a team, we would like to wish all of this year’s Year 11 students all the best for 2015.

Since the last parent eNewsletter, we have been lucky enough to accept a new group of students into Year 11 through our transition program.

For these students and parents I extend a warm welcome and offer any assistance we can provide, as well as our full support for the 2015 school year. Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or your child’s mentor if you have any queries or concerns.

The step into Year 11 can be made a lot easier if some time is spent over the holidays preparing for next year so that students hit the ground running. Things that help:

- Preparing a quiet area to study, free of distractions such as TV, an area that students can call their own. This will help put the students into the mind-set of the PREP requirements of Year 11 studies/
- Reading the English novel.
- Reading the newspaper, watching the news or visiting news sites such as news.com.au several times a week will also give a good knowledge of current affairs – these are often incorporated in many subject areas discussions.
- Most importantly, it is imperative that the students unwind from 2014 and be ready for a big 2015.

As a college, you would have heard that we have moved from Quamby into our new buildings on the Vines Road site. Although, a fair bit of history in terms of VCE and VCAL at Western Heights College passes with this move – the excitement of the new chapter is the overwhelming feeling. Spending time in the new VCE centre has filled us with enthusiasm for what we can do to ensure that the delivery of VCE and VCAL will improve to an even higher standard than before. Bring on next year!

Finally, I would like to wish all our community members a safe and joyful festive season.

Mr Brett Bullock
Year 11 Learning Community Leader.
VCE SUMMER SCHOOL
A number of organisations provide Summer School Lectures for Year 12 students. The cost, location and content of these varies. Many of these programs provide students with the opportunity to gain an overview of their Unit 3 and 4 studies. They can also provide valuable study and revision techniques. Further information can be found at the following web sites:

tsfx - www.tsfx.com.au

NEAP

VCE RESULTS - REMINDER
The VCE results are released on Monday December 15. We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our students. This will be done at the Western Heights College Awards Ceremony on Wednesday December 17. Year 12 students who will be recognized at this event will be contacted on Monday December 15 and details of the awards ceremony will be forwarded to them.

Staff will also be available to assist students who may wish to change their course preferences. Please note that VTAC change of preferences closes on December 22. More information can be found at the VTAC web site: http://www.vtac.edu.au/dates.html

The 2014 Year 12 Graduates

DONATION:
The Year 12 students donated $419.20 on Celebration Day to the Beyond Blue Foundation.

YEAR 12 2015:
This week staff moved into the VCE centre in preparation for 2015. The facilities are amazing, state of the art. We look forward to welcoming the 2015 Year 12 class to this wonderful new facility on their first day of school Thursday January 29.

Ms Kerrie Hammond
Year 12 Learning Community Leader

As the school year draws to a close, it is an opportunity for us to pause, reflect and recognise the significant experiences and people who have contributed to our lives over the past 12 months. The student wellbeing team would like to recognise the students who have participated with enthusiasm in a variety of programs. Thanks also to our partner organisations; Head Space, The City of Greater Geelong, NIRODAH and White Ribbon who have offered their resources to encourage and support the work of the college.

As a student wellbeing team we encourage families to make the most of the Christmas holidays, spending time with family and friends, celebrating and enjoying a wide variety of fun activities together. We trust that you will have a restful break and return to the new school year fresh, with a sense of enthusiasm to explore the learning opportunities that lie ahead. We also realise that being prepared for a new year often means sourcing uniform and books which can be difficult in some circumstances. If you would like assistance sourcing any school supplies, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Wellbeing team. We'd also like to remind you of State Schools Relief's new app, ‘Clk2sell’ that can be downloaded from www.clk2sell.com allowing you to quickly and easily buy and sell used uniform from the convenience of your mobile phone.

To all of the staff and students who are not returning to the college in 2015, we trust that you are taking with you, positive memories and valuable lessons that will hold you in good stead in all of your future endeavours. To all of our new and returning students we wish you all a refreshing and safe break, and we look forward to working alongside you again in 2015.

Mr Paul Rogers and the Wellbeing Team

2014 COLLEGE MAGAZINE
The cost of the College Magazine is covered in the annual levy.
If you have not paid this fee and would a like copy of the magazine for your family please make a payment of $15.00 to the General Office.
ICT at WHC:

I was watching the science show Catalyst the other night about the future of our cities in Australia. A (very) young engineer was talking about “smart” cities, what we need in the near future, and is possible now. One of the things that makes them smart is the presence of thousands of sensors placed in a huge variety of environments around the city. Rubbish bins that tell trucks when they needed to be emptied, where the air quality is bad today and why, mirrors on buildings remotely controlled for temperature management. The thing that made this “smart” was human ingenuity putting technology to work, technology that didn’t exist only a few years ago. This engineer called it “more silicon, less cement”. Smart people saw what had to be done and then looked at technology in a new way to make it happen.

As the network manager at Western Heights College I have seen the network grow from 12 Olivettis 286 PCs and one server in the early 1990s to over 1000 client devices and 20 servers today. The technology embodied in the client devices alone is mind boggling. Our current MyLe slate is a fully powered PC which you can write on like a piece of paper, take a photo or record a movie on like a camera, make a phone call on or actually use as a “computer” as well.

The integration of technology into our daily life has only just begun but already it seems ubiquitous. We communicate using smart phones incessantly, our collective memory seems to be stored in wikis and search engines. Everything is moving on-line where we talk, entertain ourselves and collaborate. Indeed our new Western Heights College buildings are themselves controlled by smart sensors. These amazing technologies hidden “under the hood” serve little purpose unless we can use them productively in our learning environments. How do we give the young people coming through our doors a pathway into the present and near future described above? Where do you see your children in the picture above? We can’t do it by teaching the old way and ignoring this future. This is the challenge we are embracing at Western Heights College.

Mr Peter Good
Network Manager

Business Centre News

PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR SCHOOL EXPENSES:

Did you know you can start paying now for 2015?

To assist families with payment of your school expenses the college offers the following options:-

Cash, credit card, EFTPOS payments can be made to the College Office.

Centrelink / Centrepay:
Centrepay is a free direct bill-paying service offered to Centrelink customers receiving regular Centrelink payments. You will need to check your eligibility with Centrelink. You decide how much you would like to pay directly to your school account from your Centrelink payments. We have many families using Centrepay to pay for school fees and charges, camps, MyLe Program etc. You can start payments for your 2015 expenses now. Please contact the college for further information and application forms.

Direct Deposit (recurring):
Set up a recurring direct deposit to the College Bank Account which will be receipted against your Family Statement. You will need to contact the college for the Bank Account details and your Family Reference Number if you choose this option.

Payment Plan:
If you are experiencing difficulty in making payments for your school fee and charges, please contact the Business Manager to make an alternative payment plan.

Payment by Phone:
You can pay by credit card over the phone, please contact the college office.

EMA – 2015
Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will cease in 2015. Parents who were previously eligible for EMA now need to prepare or make some arrangements for their 2015 costs.

Pre-Payments:
You can start paying your school fees and charges for 2015 now.

Remember, making regular payments can greatly assist parents with payment costs during the year.

Mrs Marlene Barker
Business Manager
2015 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE:
Year 10 Work Experience week in 2015 is Monday 3 August to Friday 7 August. All of our Year 10 students will be undertaking work experience placements in this week. Students are asked to use their networks to source work experience placements.
If you have a business or think your employer may be interested in hosting one of our Year 10 students the first week in August, please let me know. We are currently putting together a database of potential employers for students to access and contact. I can be contacted by email jeffery.tracey.c@edumail.vic.gov.au or on the College phone number if you would like to register your interest.

FOOT IN THE DOOR PROGRAM
The Gordon has some fantastic short courses that can assist students getting work this summer: Why not start with the Foot in the Door Program? The course is designed to give students abroad an overview of the hospitality industry and for them to walk away with:
• Tap beer pouring skills
• How to use a coffee machine
• Preparing mixed drinks
• Serving food and beverages
• Waiting on customers
• OHS considerations

The program runs,
• Tuesday 16 December 9.00am - 4.00pm or
• Tuesday 20 January 9.00am – 4.00pm
Cafe on Track, Geelong City Campus
Fee: $155
This is a great entry level course which is a great precursor to:
Responsible Serving of Alcohol only $85
Monday 8 and 15 December
Geelong City Campus
Food Handling only $145
Monday 15 December 8.30am-5.30pm
Geelong City Campus

ESPERSSO MASTER CLASS
This is a great entry level course to coffee making, so come and learn the skills required to operate and maintain a commercial coffee machine.
3 classes (2 mornings and 1 full day)
17 - 19 December 10am - 5pm
Cafe on Track, Geelong City Campus
Fee: $300

THE CONOCOPHILLIPS SCIENCE EXPERIENCE:
Do you know any students interested in science and ready to learn more about physics, chemistry and biology?

If yes, then encourage them to register for the ConocoPhillips Science Experience. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of fun, exciting and challenging activities.

In this three-day program, held at the University of Melbourne, students will be extracting their own DNA, engineering solutions to problems and learning how to use mathematics to save endangered animal species.

Dates: Wednesday 14 Jan – Friday 16 Jan 2015
Find out more about this program and application details: scienceexperience.com.au

AGRICULTURAL ASPIRATIONS
Did you know there are an estimated six jobs for every agricultural science graduate? Agricultural graduates and agricultural specialists are in high demand and the sector is growing.

With an integrated understanding of the environmental, economic and social aspects of food and fibre, graduates of the Bachelor of Agriculture will be best placed to meet the needs of the agricultural industry into the future.

The Bachelor of Agriculture is a full-time, three-year undergraduate degree. The course provides a solid foundation in science, the environment, animal production, soils and water. Throughout the course students will study at Parkville and Dookie to develop the problem solving skills and technological knowledge required to critically assess and improve industry practices.
A significant number of generous scholarships are available to assist students with study and cost of living expenses. To learn more go to: <http://fvas.unimelb.edu.au/scholarships>

Join our Pre-Ag Club

Students from Years 9 – 12 who are thinking about a career in agricultural science are encouraged to join our Pre-Ag Club. Members of the club will have access to special events, information and opportunities with the University of Melbourne and partner organisations.

fvas.unimelb.edu.au/study/pre-ag-club

SUMMER SCHOOLS AT THE VCA AND MCM

Summer School programs at the Victorian College of the Arts and Melbourne Conservatorium of Music give students a chance to train and work with experienced, engaging staff.

Visual Art Summer School

The VCA Visual Art Summer School provides a special opportunity for young people (ages 15 – 20) with an interest in contemporary visual art to explore and develop their own artwork at a level that suits their individual needs.

With streams in both painting and drawing, this four-day program is perfect for those embarking on VCE study in visual art and those aspiring to pursue tertiary study at the VCA or elsewhere.

Dates: Tuesday 13 Jan – Friday 16 Jan 2015
Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm each day

Earlybird enrolments close Tuesday 2 December.

Enrolments close Thursday 8 January (unless sold out prior).

THEATRE SUMMER SCHOOL

The VCA’s week-long Theatre Summer School workshops cover all aspects of acting and theatre making for ages 15 - 20. The days start with voice and movement training followed by afternoon classes in the students chosen stream:

- Body Talk – Physical Theatre and Ensemble Performance
- Exploration of Impro
- Much Ado About Something
- Soap Up – from Ramsey Street to Summer Bay
- Theatre Making
- VCE Drama Unit 3

Dates: Monday 19 January – Friday 23 January 2015
Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm each day

Earlybird enrolments close Monday 8 December. Enrolments close Wednesday 14 January (unless sold out prior).

POPSONG WRITING BOOTCAMP

Behind every good pop song is a skilled songwriter, and this intensive course is perfect for aspiring songwriters who dream of a career in the music industry.

Students will receive valuable feedback from an experienced and professional tutor who will help improve and develop students’ song writing practice. Suitable for students aged 16 and over.

Dates: Monday 19 January – Friday 23 January 2015
Time: 10.00am – 4.00pm each day

Earlybird enrolments close Monday 8 December.

Enrolments close Wednesday 14 January (unless sold out prior).

For further details on these programs and other shortcourses held throughout the year, visit: vca-mcm.unimelb.edu.au/shortcourses

Miss Tracey Jeffery
MIPs Co-ordinator