Greetings and welcome to the 2014 school year at Ave Maria College. A particular welcome is extended to those students and families beginning their association with Ave Maria College. As the newly appointed Principal, I have had the special joy of beginning the learning journey about the many good things taking place here, for the benefit of our students. The College has come to life in the last week as staff and students have returned. I now welcome the opportunity to meet many parents and invite you to introduce yourself.

The College Board of Governance, along with staff and students has certainly enabled me a glimpse of the spirit of Ave Maria College.

Welcome to New Staff

Similarly, we welcome a number of teaching staff to the Ave Maria College community. I know that you will join with me in extending a warm welcome over the coming weeks to:

Ms Elizabeth Allsopp - English/Humanities teacher. Mrs Allsopp holds a MTeaching (Sec), Grad Dip Teaching, Grad Dip Arts, B Arts.

Ms Nisrine Amine - English/Drama teacher. Ms Amine joins us from St Marks Catholic College, Stanhope Gardens, NSW. Ms Amine holds a B Teaching, B Communications.

Mr Richard Cosway Languages Other Than English comes to us from Mercy College. Mr Cosway holds a M Ed (Asian Studies), Grad Dip Teaching, B Arts.

Ms Jessica Kemp – graduate teacher English/Drama. Ms Kemp holds a Grad Dip Ed, B Arts.

Mrs Louise Newton – teacher Mathematics/Humanities. Mrs Newton holds a Grad Dip Ed, B Biological Science.

Mrs Louisa Fernanda Ochoa Salinas – graduate teacher Physics/Mathematics. Mrs Ochoa holds a M Teaching (Sec), B Ind Engineering (Colombia).

Mr Deane Sobey – graduate teacher holds a M Teaching (Sec), M Fine Arts, B Arts, Grad Dip Graphic Design. Mr Sobey comes to us from the private sector as a Graphic Design Consultant.

Semester 1 Student Placement Teachers

Ms Rachel Darci - Full time placement in the English Domain

Ms Andrea Fairlie - Part time internship as a Student Counsellor

Student Results

I am very pleased to announce that the graduating Class of 2013 achieved excellent results. Our College Dux for 2013 is Taylah Ransome with an ATAR of 97.7. Staff and students are to be congratulated on the following fine achievements:

- 58% of students ranked in the top 30% of ATAR scores
- 62% of Study Scores were above the State average
- The Median Study Score was 32.

The wonderful achievements of the Class of 2013 will be celebrated at our VCE Awards afternoon on Thursday, 20 February 2014. The pursuit of excellence is a combined effort – in celebrating these fine results we also acknowledge the commitment of teaching staff over a six year journey. The learning community at school and family support is critical in enabling each young woman to get in touch with all that she can be.

Opening School Mass

The Opening School Mass will take place at the College on Friday, 7 February at 12.00noon. In coming together in community we celebrate a new school year and pray for God's grace and blessing.

Information Evenings

Information evenings are scheduled early in the year in order to provide parents with an overview of their daughter's year ahead. I warmly encourage you to be in attendance at these evenings. You will have an opportunity to meet key staff as well as the opportunity to learn of the highlights,
expectations and administrative details applicable at each year level. The particular details will be published in forthcoming newsletters but you may wish to make note of the relevant dates below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>Thursday, 13 February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 10 and 11</td>
<td>Thursday, 20 February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Tuesday, 25 February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Tuesday, 11 March</td>
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**College Newsletter**
The College Newsletter is published fortnightly and distributed via the Parent Portal to all families. We rely on parents accessing the Newsletter when it is published as an important channel of communication.

In closing, as we begin another year with all of its hopes and expectations, let us remind ourselves of who we are as a Catholic community, built on the Franciscan tradition. Our Annual theme, *Goodness matters, Beauty matters, Matter matters* is richly Franciscan in reminding us that all that is good and beautiful is a gift given by our Creator God. All living matter is a reflection of God and a sure sign of God present with us and in us. This is most evident in families and so I close with a Prayer for Families. I trust that each family has experienced real moments of grace and peace over the summer break.

**Prayer for Families**
Loving God. We thank you for the gift of families. We ask your blessing on all families today and always.

Be with us in our daily life together. Be our guide in times of challenge. Be our strength in times of difficulty. Be our joy in times of delight.

Help our families to grow stronger in your love and show us how to love one another as you have loved us.

May we welcome Jesus as the unseen guest in our home. May we be His voice and hands, respecting and caring for those we meet.

May we look to the example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, as we strive to be the best family that we can be.

Most Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us. Amen.

Elizabeth Hanney
Principal

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**Deputy Principal**

They say there are two certainties in life; death and taxes. There is another certainty in life I’d like to add — change. Change is happening around us all the time. It can happen quickly, it can happen slowly, it can happen at a rate that is anywhere in between. It can happen because of ageing, fashion, technology, genetic mutation or human nature. It can happen because of nature. Change is a force of nature.

History tells us that species who have survived the longest are those most able to adapt to change and as humans we have been able to exist and thrive due to our ability to adapt. And the key element to our adaptation is the ability to learn. But to have the ability to learn is one thing; having the desire to learn is another. I believe the key to our success as learners is our attitude to learning. If we have a learning attitude we can embrace change rather than running from it. And there is no point running from change.

I liken it to having a Ferrari in the garage. This wonderful example of human design and manufacturing will not demonstrate what it’s capable of if there is no-one who can be bothered taking it for a drive. Full of potential, it will not move one centimetre without someone choosing to move it. As teachers we have heard it said to us many times that we are preparing students for careers that do not currently exist. And this is very true. There are many careers in industries today that did not exist five or more years ago. So if they do not yet exist, how can we know what to prepare our young people for? At Ave Maria College it’s not just what our young women learn as it may have been when many of us adults were students. For us it is just as much about how they learn. And in doing this we are better able to develop their capacity to learn. The greater the capacity to learn, the greater the ability to take on any opportunity that presents itself.

We are a learning organisation. It is a policy for Ave Maria College. But what does being a learning organisation mean? Learning organisations enable a climate that fosters, and in fact demands, learning at all levels in the organisation. Put simply, it means a learning attitude is required of students and staff alike. We are enabling a culture where those who have a desire to learn will thrive and genuinely love being a part of Ave Maria College. The flip side of this is that those who are happy to coast along without any real desire to improve will feel uncomfortable here as they are constantly challenged to learn. So I leave you to ponder the health of your learning attitude. I encourage all members of our community to bring the highest standard in this approach with us to everything we do.

Phillip Tascone
Deputy Principal
Head of School
Years 10 - 12

Welcome back!
As I said to the Year 10-12 students on Monday, it’s always with relief that we get back the heart of the school, our students, at the end of each January. As well as reflecting on summers spent reading, relaxing, thinking and planning, this time of year allows a short moment before the hubbub of formal assessments to consider what it is that we are each striving for. I have put it to the students that their interests are what will sustain them, and their effort that which will reward them. Without an active interest in something they are learning, students will drift through each class and risk jumping through the hoops without enthusiasm. Without equally active effort, students will enjoy themselves enormously but close off their options after school. Cutting that balance between enjoyment and hard work (not always so enjoyable) is perhaps the grail of senior secondary students and something to which I think they ought aspire.

Parent Information Night Years 10 and 11
The Year 10 and 11 Parent Information Night is on Thursday, 20 February, beginning at 7.30pm in the Hall. The night is an opportunity to get some useful information about school processes, but more interestingly to hear from a recently graduated VCE student from Elevate Educate about some of the things that families can do to support their child in the senior years of schooling. It is also a great opportunity to hear from and meet our new College Principal, Mrs Elizabeth Hanney. More information will be sent home with students shortly. I look forward to seeing you there.

VCE Results 2013
Finally, a thoroughly deserved congratulations to our Year 12 Class of 2013. They achieved sparkling VCE results and are a credit to themselves, to their families and to the College. Well done indeed, girls. We wish you all every success in the coming years.

Michael Horne
Head of School Years 10 - 12

Head of School
Years 7 - 9

The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step ...
Welcome to the 2014 academic year; and to the Year 7 families and new students across Years 8 to 12, welcome to the Ave Maria College community. As the College Academic Captain Ella McNicol said at the Whole School assembly on Monday – “you are one of us now!”

The beginning of the school year is always filled with a range of emotions – excitement, relief, anticipation, fear, joy and hope. On Friday, 31 January we welcomed 135 Year 7 students, and a dozen new students from other year levels, and the mix of emotions was evident as the students familiarised themselves with the school layout, lockers, timetables and new teachers. Thankfully, the only tears were those from the Year 7 parents as they dropped their daughters off. The decision to have the Year 7s start a day before the rest of the student body was a new one, and it seems, was well received and appreciated by the Year 7 students and parents. It was wonderful to see how quickly the girls settled into the secondary school environment. This was helped, in part, by the continuing guidance from the Year 11 Peer Support Leaders, in conjunction with the day’s activities. I’m sure the ‘treasure hunt’ at recess was one of the main reasons that the girls are now navigating their way around the College with ease after just a few days. Likewise the ‘meet your teachers’ lesson has meant that the girls are already familiar with who their teachers are and had an introduction of what to expect in each subject. At the end of the day, it was lovely to see the students leaving with a smile on their face, and even a few who proclaimed they now couldn’t wait until Monday to do it all again.

Whilst it is all new beginnings and new experiences for the Year 7s, the start of the year is just as exciting for the Year 8 and 9 students. The opportunity to make a positive start, have an organised locker and set new learning goals has been embraced by the students, and supported by their teachers. I look forward to continuing to work with the staff and students, particularly at Years 7-9, this year. I hope to see each student striving for excellence, trying their hardest and achieving their very best in 2014.

Joanna Hammer
Head of School Years 7 - 9
Faith and Religious Education

Our 2014 theme flows from a talk by Franciscan Br Bill Short OFM to staff in July 2013. One way of understanding the theme is as follows:

*Goodness matters* since we are each made good by God, the source of all good. Education aims beyond knowledge to the virtue of goodness.

*Beauty matters* because it helps bring joy to life through simple daily beauty such as a sunset or through the arts, music or poetry.

*Matter matters* since God created everyone and everything. All our learning about the material world helps us to more deeply appreciate God’s creation.

The staff have worked in Domains to explore how our College theme can become a lived reality throughout the College this year.

Our Opening Mass occurred on Friday, 7 February, celebrated by Fr Tony Kerin. It is important for us to gather as a believing community and thank God for our blessings. The College Leaders were presented with their badges. The Year 7 students and other students new to the College were presented with a Tau cross to symbolise their belonging in a Franciscan community.

There is the opportunity for students in Years 10 - 12 to participate in the Edmund Rice Refugee Centre’s Homework Club that occurs on Mondays during term time. The students will attend approximately four (4) Mondays in a row in a group of about six. They are driven to and from by a staff member. Please note that there is the opportunity for a parent who would like to help driving to do so. If interested, please contact me by phone or email.

Patrick Jurd
Director of Faith and Religious Education

Student Wellbeing

Dress for Success in 2014...

Motivation is the fuel induced desire that exist as a bridge between setting and attaining goals. It involves the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive force that activates behaviour. However, in this equation when we refer to student motivation, it automatically adds a few other ingredients to the mix itself, such as self-belief, control and failure avoidance.

1. **Self-belief** is about helping students challenge their negative thinking by learning to differentiate unrealistic vs realistic thinking and placing circumstances into perspective in the now and based on facts. When we second guess our intentions we display self doubt this creates worries, stress and fear, however, self-belief is learnable, interchangeable and flexible. Therefore offering opportunity to retrain and discard limiting ideas about oneself that may be constraining, stagnated or based on unhelpful earlier learned beliefs and self critical voices that block the path to success.

   Self belief is not exclusively based on defeating the negative thoughts but also in rising above restrictions, stepping out of comfort zones, developing openness and flexibility of mind.

2. **Control** is an essential ingredient in developing self-efficacy, independence and emotional regulation. Enhancing students sense of academic control means that their focus must be placed on the effort they have when executing a task and a well grounded knowledge of the strategies that will help them move towards their desired target these principles are within the students power. If students focus on these they’ll be able to be more successful and find themselves by default more empowered. Being empowered is a way to exert control.

To be continued......

Faye Evans
Student Counsellor

Important Dates Term 1 2014

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<td>Year 7 Parent Information Night</td>
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