



## BRIGHT FUTURES FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST

On Thursday, March 12 Damascus College Ballarat held its annual Bright Futures fundraising breakfast for the Scholarship of the same name. The College was thrilled to welcome a large contingent of alumni, staff and community members to the event held at the Ballarat Golf Club. Other special guests included a number of Sisters of Mercy, leaders from the Catholic Education Office Ballarat (CEOB) and the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat offices.

The assembled crowd were welcomed to the breakfast by Assistant Principal, Tony Haintz who opened the festivities with a simple prayer of welcome. Sarah Boswell, Leader of School Development then shared the details about the Bright Futures Scholarship, its benefactors and the need to support the scholarship through fundraising. Sarah then welcomed to the stage Year 10 student Megan O'Beirne. Megan spoke from the heart about what receiving the 2018 Sporting Scholarship meant to her and how it has impacted her life.



The special guest speaker for this event was Judy Brewer, Order of Australia. Judy, from the Class of 1979 is Chair of the Autism CRC since its inception in 2013. In 2017 she became Pro-Chancellor of Charles Sturt University. In 2019 Judy received a Churchill Fellowship as well as being named one of the inaugural Shining Light, Inspiring Alumni Award winner. She is the mother to two amazing boys Harrison and Dominic and widow of the former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer.

Judy spoke openly of her time as a boarder at Sacred Heart, the loss of her beloved husband Tim and her work with Autism CRC. Judy shared her journey as the mother of an autistic son with all its bounties and challenges. Judy engaged with the audience during a lively and very entertaining Q&A session. She

discussed the significance and importance of her personal motto "bloom where you are planted" and her journey to create a more inclusive and welcoming world for everyone, including autistic people.

Guests of the event were able to enjoy learning more about Damascus College and the educational opportunities available to its students as well as enjoying a sumptuous buffet breakfast.

The final speaker for the day was College Principal, Matthew Byrne who thanked the assembled crowd for attending the event to support Damascus College and its Bright Futures Scholarship. He spoke of the importance that an education can make in a child's life. As a Catholic school, Damascus College is committed to providing excellence in education, and it is our privilege to be able to offer opportunities that benefit our students and the wider community. He spoke of the importance of the welfare of our young people and hence the emphasis on providing an environment which is secure and safe, happy and productive.



He reminded the attendees that their generosity and commitment can help to make a real impact on the lives of our students. “Your gift allows us to support an exciting and enriching educational experience for students”.

In holding this event Damascus College hopes to extend the Bright Futures Scholarship to more than one Year 7 student per year. If you wish to give towards this worthy cause, you can do this by calling the College office (03 5337 2222) or online at [damascus.vic.edu.au](http://damascus.vic.edu.au)

*Korina Hegert - Alumni and Development Officer*

*Top: Judy Brewer*

*Middle: Sarah Boswell, Megan O’Beirne and Judy Brewer*

*Bottom: Damascus College Bright Futures Breakfast*