Review

MAGAZINE 2020

CITIPOINTE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ALUMNI

CONTENT

04 **Marika Brown** Class of 1985
06 **Ruth Limkin** Class of 1991
08 **Luke Peterson** Class of 1995
10 **Andrew Sercombe** Class of 1995
12 **Jeannie Tan** Class of 1998
14 **Andrew Geeves** Class of 1998
16 **Tim Mccullough** Class of 2002
18 **Jeff and Monique Alexis** Class of 2002/2004
20 **Jess Teunis** Class of 2003
22 **Ben Cherry** Class of 2004
24 **Daniel Harris** Class of 2007
26 **Emily Muller** Class of 2009
28 **Katie Lane** Class of 2009
30 **Joseph Nolan** Class of 2012

Cover: Ruth Limkin Class of 1991. See story on page 6.

Citipointe Christian College

Published by CITIPOINTE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE CRICOS Provider Code 00996F
322 Wecker Road Carindale QLD 4152 I **T** 07 3347 5899 I **F** 07 3347 5900
E mail@citipointe.qld.edu.au I **W** citipointe.qld.edu.au
Contact the Registrar for enrolment enquiries
Editor Mrs Lucinda Gray
Email your alumni stories to review@citipointe.qld.edu.au
Design Studio e Pty Ltd I 0403 048 610 I bradley@studioe.com.au

All material published in Review Magazine is copyright by Citipointe Christian College. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, without written permission from the publisher.

Please visit the College Alumni website for further details:
citipointe.qld.edu.au/community/alumni

From the Principal

It is a privilege to be part of a school that cares for and nurtures individuals.

As this edition of *Review* shows, students remember significance, whether it be a significant teacher, event, conversation or opportunity. This year has been significant and will be remembered as a year of overcoming, perseverance and unity. The Class of 2020 chose the word *Unity* as their focus, not knowing what was to come. But they have unified and succeeded and finished well. I welcome the Class of 2020 as Citipointe alumni and look forward to hearing about their journeys in the coming years.

For now, I hope you will enjoy the following stories of significance in *Review 2020*. Thank you to all the contributors. We love to hear of lives being impacted and united by the foundation of a Citipointe Christian College education.

Pastor Brian Mulheran
Principal

Class of 2020

Marika Brown (née Schrinner)

Class of 1985
Teacher, Wife, Leader of Women

Marika Brown (nee Schrinner) graduated from Christian Outreach College (COC, now Citipointe Christian College) in 1985. She loved studying teaching at Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education as it was called in those days, now known as Griffith University. Her first teaching job was at COC. She had a yearning to teach upper primary students after doing practical placements in upper primary classrooms, but her first job was in Year 1, alongside Ruth Gravestein, now Head of Primary, and Kay Gagliardi, another long serving staff member. "We were a pretty awesome team. Those years were filled with creativity!"

In 1997, she gave in to the travel bug, moved to London and experienced two extremes of teaching conditions. She recalls, "I was in one of those North London schools you see on TV shows with 12-foot-high barbed wire fences, not a blade of grass in the school and parents who would have screaming matches outside the classroom in the afternoon. The placement following this was like something out of an Enid Blyton storybook: sixteen angelic little girls with straw boaters, ties and black and yellow blazers."

Marika returned to Australia and COC in 1998, but soon felt God stirring her to go back to England. When she read in her daily devotions: "Go back and finish what you started last year," she sensed that God was talking to her. She packed, sold and shipped her belongings, and arrived in London where things promptly fell apart. "There's a reason that Old Kent Road is the least valuable property on the Monopoly board and that's where I was working." The conditions were untenable so she had to resign. However, this led to an unexpected position as an assistant to an aristocratic English lady. Marika was now chief dog walker, driver, chef, shopper and companion. This time allowed for some healing and restoration that led to a wonderful teaching position at a girls' boarding school for the next three years.

In early 2001, God prompted Marika to read the Book of Ruth which she describes as a story of "somebody returning to their homeland where God took control of every aspect. The amazing thing is the Book of Ruth is a love story and God used those months to allow my relationship with Derek (Brown) to flourish."

Derek and Marika had been great friends since meeting at Youth group. After a four month telephone courtship, Marika returned to Brisbane at the end of July and within three weeks they were engaged and three months later they were married. They have now been married for 19 years.

On returning, Marika settled at Groves Christian College, teaching her beloved Year 6, and then became the Head of Upper Primary. She missed the classroom so much that she landed back at Citipointe in 2010.

Marika's other love is ministry, so teaching extension students part time and coordinating the women's ministry at her church offered wonderful balance. She also completed postgraduate study in gifted education which was "absolutely life transforming for me. It opened my mind to so many new ways of being able to reach these students."

Marika explains the needs of learning extension children: "We find that students who are super bright will react in a number of different ways to schooling. Some will just continue doing the best that they can with everything they do, but others start getting

Marika teaching extension students - Colonial School

bored because they already know the work. This can cause them to either underachieve in order to fit in with other students, to switch off and disengage, or they may become the class clown."

"I find they do need a different approach. They need to work much more quickly and require considerably less repetition in terms of reviewing work. But they can also bring a raft of other characteristics such as perfectionism and high anxiety in their desire to do well. I find the pastoral side of what I do crucial because I'm helping them individually, not just to do well academically, but to be able to develop the skills that they need for life."

Marika knew she wanted to be a teacher from her early teen years. "After a brief work experience stint, I knew that being a teacher was what I was going to do. And here I am 31 years into teaching, feeling more inspired now as a teacher than I did when I first started with all that youthful energy."

"In my experience, Christian education doesn't force students to think or act a certain way but offers them choices. It provides an environment for the seeds that are planted to flourish."

Marika recalls her own school days with fondness. The only piece of play equipment back then was a trampoline and she remembers the day a boy crashed straight through it. The whole school was in A Block, with only one wall in there. "The Year 1s had their own class, but the rest of us were all in one big open space. There were no floor coverings in those first few months. We had port-a-loos and I vividly remember being asked to guard the door for a little girl. I had locked the door but got distracted and ran away, leaving her locked in the toilet!"

"We got up to a lot of mischief because we were allowed to go to the oval across the road at lunchtime and used to all nick down along the creek," she recounts with the cheekiest of grins.

Marika says that her English and Music teacher, Mrs Faye Crane, captured her imagination with her ability to tell stories in a way that made her want to experience those things for herself. This led to some wonderful travel dreams that became a reality.

In regard to teaching at Citipointe, Marika says, "When your values are aligned with where you work and the people you spend time with, you actually have the opportunity to be the most effective that you possibly can be."

She also loves interior decoration and has a side business staging homes for real estate sales. She loves experimenting with beautiful furnishings and artwork. But her biggest passion outside of work is travel. She particularly enjoys Europe – a wistful look comes into her eyes at the mention of the Mediterranean.

Marika encourages anyone interested in a career in teaching to pursue it, stating that, "It is the best profession in the world." She loves the energy of being in the classroom; the laughter, the engagement and the problem-solving that goes with finding the best way to present something. "The students themselves are the best part about teaching."

Whether she has been working with school students, lecturing at university or teaching Bible College subjects, whether she is speaking to a large group of ladies or writing a blog post for a select few, Marika is guided by the call to teach that she believes God ordained from a young age. She is grateful for the opportunities that Citipointe has given her, both as a student and as a teacher. "The College has opened up so many things for me in life and enabled me to become who God has called me to be."

Ruth Limkin (née Starrenburg)

Class of 1991
CEO, Entrepreneur, Wife

Ruth Limkin has had an unexpected, non-traditional career journey, and wouldn't have it any other way. She began a degree in Economics but withdrew to have a gap year and volunteer at her church. She began Bible College while working part time and remained on staff at Nexus church for 14 years.

Ruth worked in administration, then as creative ministries pastor for seven years. She also worked with young adults and in the area of communications. She started a charity, Nexus Care, and redesigned its food programs, and then started up their kindergarten. Also, during that time, she wrote for the *Courier Mail*. She'd seen an article in the *Courier Mail* about the church's view on women among other things. What that commentator put in their article was very, very different from what Ruth had experienced, so she wrote to the editor to offer a different view of the church.

This led to Ruth writing social commentary from a Christian perspective for a mainstream audience and continued for eight years while she also consulted in communications. When the High Court challenge to school chaplaincy occurred, Ruth worked with Scripture Union Queensland and managed their national media strategy. She also volunteered with Red Frogs for about ten years including media liaison and national media strategy.

"While initially I'd thought I would be working for a church for the rest of my life and loved that idea, I started to sense a change where I felt like I was meant to go more marketplace, which was fairly unexpected. That probably took a couple of years of processing. So I took a big step of faith and resigned, not knowing what I was going to. Of course, the very next day, absolutely nothing happened, and I still didn't know what I was going to do!"

Around six weeks later, someone Ruth had met a couple of years earlier contacted her out of the blue and said that Fiona Simpson was going to be the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and was looking for a communications staff member. "First of all, I searched what the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament does and then I said, 'Sure!'" Ruth worked as protocol and communications officer, then about six months in she was appointed to the Chief of Staff role. She had the opportunity to be the Parliament's project coordinator for the G20 leaders retreat which is where she met and was photographed with US President Barack Obama.

After the change of government, and some time in business consulting, Ruth was approached to start up The Banyans Health and Wellness. In December 2015, she began recruiting a team and developing a program for what would become a private treatment centre. "I didn't really have any idea of the extent of the problem: good people who are in pain and stressed and anxious, who are prescribed medication or self-medicate and it then gets out of control. It is incredibly inspiring to hear people share their stories of how working with the team at The Banyans transformed their life. It's amazing."

When asked about what she likes best about her role, Ruth says, "I'm good at knowing what I don't know and getting people who do know to work together. We have incredible specialists in their field, incredibly competent, incredibly caring, and seeing them work together, and giving them the freedom to use their gifting and their skills, experience and

Fiona Simpson, Barack Obama and Ruth Limkin

Ruth and Stephen Limkin

education to change people's lives, is what I get out of bed in the morning for."

Ruth manages her busy schedule well and enjoys governance and the strategic direction of organisations. As well as CEO of The Banyans, she is on the Board of Bible Society Australia and Christian Super. "I love the fact that we can help look after people's retirement funds with ethical investing and that we can empower people to be really kingdom minded with their finances and have a very purposeful retirement."

Reminiscing about school, Ruth remembers the spiritual growth that occurred when she was in Year 11 and some student prayer meetings started happening at lunchtime. This is where she made her adult decision of faith. This changed her whole life, building her sense of identity and worth and value. She also recalls some wonderful teachers and their positive impact on her life. Her least favourite memory of school was participating in the cross country.

Throughout school, Ruth enjoyed debating and was a part of the Lions Young Student of the Year awards. Several people suggested that she study law, but she took the time to ask God what He wanted her to do with her life and has found herself on this incredible journey. She has held firm to the idea of pressing towards the goal and staying future focused, determined and persistent. "I think that's definitely something I've taken with me. Faith is an integrated part of your life."

Ruth is looking forward to celebrating her 20th wedding anniversary in 2021. It will be an extra special celebration as she has recently overcome breast cancer. She was diagnosed with early stage cancer in 2019 and underwent surgeries and six weeks of radiation. She has just passed one year cancer free and is grateful that she practiced what she preaches at The Banyans: "Wellbeing is getting medical attention when you need it."

Ruth is resilient and determined. "I'll always find a way to get things done. There's always a solution, you just have to find it." It has been said of Ruth that she is a serial entrepreneur as she started a charity, a kindergarten, a consultancy business and now The Banyans. She has been a finalist in the Telstra Businesswoman of the Year awards twice, in 2019 and 2020. Her humility is a rare quality among people with her level of success.

Ruth's advice is to remind each student that, "God has a unique path for each and every one of us and if we can learn what that is and trust Him with that there's incredible grace for the journey and joy in the journey as well. And as the Bible says in Romans 12:2: 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will'."

Luke Petersen

Class of 1995
Coach, Leader, Husband, Father

Luke began his study journey straight from school. He started his Bachelor of Science degree but found the content and structure didn't suit him. Work was more appealing and hospitality jobs, from fast food to coffee shops, developed into running a café. After a few years he moved into banking and insurance.

It was around 1999 that Luke returned to his passion – basketball. He started coaching children, and decided that to be a successful coach, he would align himself with successful people. Brian Kerle, a former NBL champion coach, was an excellent mentor. Luke started to scale back his work shifts to attend Brisbane Bullets practices. He developed a good relationship with the head coach for the Bullets which eventually led to taking on a role with the Bullets Development Squad as an assistant coach.

This fuelled his passion even more and Luke decided to aim for the USA College basketball scene. What began as coaching at summer camps turned into coaching at the University of Texas, and then a smaller school,

Concordia University of Texas. "The University of Texas came with all the glitz and glamour of division one basketball. I think that year it was one of the largest colleges in the States. It was such a thrill being on the bench in a sold out 17,000 seat arena, then coming home at night and seeing your highlights on ESPN."

"I look back and see how some of the players have gone on around the world, NBA All Stars, MVPs, a couple of NBA Championships amongst the group. That's more thrilling now than then!"

Luke recalls the buzz and excitement of his time at the University of Texas, and also loved the opportunity that the smaller school afforded him. After his time in the States came to an end, he returned to Brisbane and the Bullets Development Squad again. Nine months later he took a role as the Development Officer for Basketball Queensland in Toowoomba. He was coaching the state league side and going out to primary schools and high schools conducting development workshops, coaching sessions and clinics in the afternoons.

He has travelled a great deal around Queensland with basketball, as well as much of the United States. He has scoured almost every inch of Texas recruiting from small and big schools, from small towns to major cities. He especially loved Washington DC and New York as well for their history.

Luke maintained his involvement on the basketball scene, but returned to insurance, firstly in Toowoomba and then back in Brisbane with RACQ.

It wasn't long before his natural flair for training and coaching was noticed and this has now translated to his corporate role. "The way I led in my 20s is so different from what I would do in my 40s. The coaching is about buy-in and connection and defining roles and getting people to adapt to those roles. It's about empowering staff and focusing on what people do well and then putting them in those positions to succeed."

"I love working for leaders who do that, and I love seeing leaders who set people up for success, looking at what they do well, rather than just worrying about the negatives. You can still fix those but keep the focus on strengths."

Luke misses the camaraderie that competition brings. "Whether you're coaching elite level men or a representative under 16s boys team, there's a togetherness that comes when you're striving for that shared goal."

Ever an encourager, Luke's advice to current students is, "When you look at a report card, always look at the As and Bs first and ask yourself, "Why am I getting As and Bs here?" before you worry about any Cs or Ds, and why you're not getting great results there. Because when you get out into the real world, no one's going to care about what you can't do well. You're going to succeed based on doing those things that you do really well."

When asked about his memories from school, Luke predictably answers, "Basketball. Lots and lots of basketball!" Long-term teacher, Rodney Webb, was running the program back then with alumnus Nigel Berghan (Class of 1999) who played for the Brisbane Bullets. "It didn't matter if we had only 15 minutes for a break, we would be playing basketball every chance we got." At the time, Luke didn't enjoy the discipline of the classroom, but later on he was able to appreciate the benefits. "There were always clear expectations on you, they would hold you accountable, and those are the things that really stuck with me and carried on into adulthood. It's the development the teachers give you in your character, the way you work and the way you go about things that carries on beyond school and informs you going forward."

Accountability is a trait he values. Luke remembers one of the teachers had a saying: "Do the right thing, then do it right and do it because it's right." This still resonates with him today.

"One of the things that I really appreciated about COC was the way that faith could be integrated into day-to-day life. Although we had chapels and Christian studies, it was more about the fact that faith and life weren't mutually exclusive things. It wasn't religion in Christian studies class and the rest of the time it was all academics. It was the fact that your faith could be integrated into everything about your day from the start, through your breaks, all your classes until the end."

Luke shares his life with his lovely wife and two young children. Luke jokingly says that he is starting ball work early with them to achieve school or college scholarships in the future! Luke is currently studying his MBA, fitting it around his work and two young children.

Andrew Sercombe

Class of 1995
Pastor, Husband, Father, Leader

Work on your character not just your coursework.

Following graduation from Christian Outreach College, Andrew Sercombe (Class of 1995) completed a Bachelor of Commerce in marketing and human resource management at Griffith University. He began a graduate job in sales and marketing for Castrol Oil, which was later acquired globally by BP. "I really enjoyed watching the way that BP brought a level of professionalism in their change management process ... they brought in a way of doing things and I was very impressed with their management style."

Around the time that Andrew was both studying and working, he had begun to play the guitar. "I picked up music after I left school, leading worship for a Youth group. I was terrible. But something burst in my heart around music. A passion for song writing and worship emerged and grew. I was working for one of the largest companies in the world and making good money but it felt insignificant. I wanted to do something that impacted people's lives in a meaningful way and have a bit more purpose – and music was that thing."

Andrew arranged a year of leave from work and moved to UK working for an organisation and church called Soul Survivor. He was a worship leader and began to teach and preach whilst studying at London School of Theology. He ended up resigning from BP and completed his undergraduate theology degree in London.

Andrew's father is a pastor and so Andrew knows the workload, the toll and the effort that this role requires. He wasn't really looking for the same career, but the pull to church leadership was strong. He found himself as a worship pastor at St Paul's Shadwell (Captain Cook's old church), a plant of Holy Trinity Brompton in inner East London not far from the Tower of London, Tower Bridge and the old docks. He was working with some of the most wealthy and some of the most poor. It was here that he met and married his beautiful wife, Megan.

Academic work continued, and their first child was born while Andrew delved deeper into charismatic theology, completing his Master's degree in Bible Theology at King's College London. "I have a fascination for seeing how theology impacts on everyday life, and why what we think and what we believe is important to how we behave."

In 2013, Andrew felt called to return to Australia and took up a similar role in the worship and creative space at Gateway Baptist Church in Mackenzie. He has held a number of positions since then including the evening service pastor, young adults pastor, interim campus pastor, and since August 2019 the Pastor of Gateway City Campus. He is also now father to four gorgeous children.

He led the campus for seven months before the 2020 lockdown began. "You think of church planting as stressful with lots of hard work. We have worked really hard, but it has also been very enjoyable. There's a real heart in our church for the marginalized, the homeless, refugees, international students and those who are not in community, and God has just grown us in a wonderful way. It really has been fun!"

Andrew finds a high level of job satisfaction in

The Sercombe Family

leading a church. "Being a pastor means that you can dip your toes into a whole range of different areas of expertise and experience and find what works for you." He enjoys the variety that the role requires: leadership and management, communications and marketing, teaching and preaching, pastoral care and psychology, creative arts and financial management. "All of these things can sit within leading a church. And I love leading people and mobilizing teams."

When Andrew reflects on his youth, his first thought is that he really didn't like school very much. That was until he was selected to be sports captain in Year 12. "I never got a sports pin, I was never on the athletics team, I was never in the basketball team. But clearly some teachers thought that there was something in me for leadership." Andrew says he must have done a good enough job as sports captain as three of his brothers and one of his sisters earned the role of school captain in the years that followed! Andrew recalls moving from a small primary school to COC in Year 8, which was a bit intimidating. He is the eldest of seven children, so he didn't know anything about high school – there were no footsteps to follow. He remembers Mr Guinane always being passionate for Jesus and "that left an imprint in my life." He also remembers Mr Coles speaking life to him as a young man, which meant a lot.

During most of his schooling years, he had been a relatively short boy, but a growth spurt at the end of Year 11 made a big difference to how he perceived himself. Paired with his role in the leadership team and being inspired by the worship during Chapel, he recalls Year 12 with fondness. He believes the seeds were sown for his future in worship during Chapel.

Andrew has lots of advice for current students: "Failure is not the end. What you decide to do at school is not necessarily where you'll end up. Work on your character, not just your coursework, because you can change your career at any point, but your character is developed over time and will last wherever you go. And we learn that character from Jesus."

"What is gold in our culture now is emotional intelligence. The ability to self-reflect, the ability to have empathy and compassion, the ability to read people's emotions. In Jesus we see someone who modelled for us a life of incredible emotional maturity."

Andrew's hobbies are centred around family. He and Megan love getting outdoors, running and bike riding with their children. Megan is from the United States and the pair met in London, so it's no surprise that they love to explore: "We love to see new things and explore new things together."

When talking about balancing a busy job with a busy home life, Andrew observes that, "This coronavirus season has provided a bit of a reality check and a refresh and reset for us as a family. Ministry, like any job, so easily takes over. It's been a gift for us to ensure that ministry doesn't come before marriage or family. In fact, the ministry is healthier when you get the order right."

You can find out more about Andrew and hear more of his advice at Gateway City Campus.

Jeannie Tan

Class of 1998
Lawyer, Mediator, Business owner, Traveller

Jeannie grew up in Malaysia and arrived in Australia as an international student. She had heard about Christian Outreach College (COC) after meeting a teacher, Mr Michael Long. “When my parents wanted to send me overseas, they wanted me to be in a good environment, a Christian environment. I flew here for an interview with Pastor Ron Woolley when school had already started for the year. I’m assuming I did well,” because at age 15, Jeannie began her COC journey.

Jeannie wanted to be a lawyer from the age of 5 and she has never wavered, so when she started at COC, the first subject she chose was Legal Studies. She completed Years 11 and 12 before embarking on her Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Diploma at QUT and was admitted as a lawyer in the Supreme Court in Queensland and the High Court of Australia. Jeannie joined a law firm straightaway and started practicing in family law, wills and estates and personal injuries.

About becoming a lawyer, Jeannie says, "You need to work hard, you need to work smart, and you need to have an excellent attitude." This hard work began when she started school at COC with Malay and Chinese as her native languages. She needed to use an English dictionary regularly, translate to understand everything and adapt to a new country's education system.

When she thinks back to her time at school, she wonders how she managed to do all her subjects in English but concludes that it took a lot of hard work, good friends and supportive teachers. She recalls Mrs Borinetti, her English teacher, who was kind and approachable and Mrs Fyffe who she had for Accounting, Legal Studies and softball, who was very supportive. Jeannie has wonderful memories of her time at school especially the excursions and camps. The difference between school in Australia and Malaysia was enormous. "Being able to interact with the teacher regularly, rather than just sitting in class, was a big shift. And I literally had all the best teachers!"

Jeannie's career has been diverse; not only is she a lawyer, she is also an investigator and mediator. Her skills enable her to take a big dispute, narrow down the issues to simplify them for the people involved, and help them move forward to come to a resolution. "I find this so rewarding because that brings calmness to people," she says. Her heart and passion for children led her into family law when she started practicing. But the role was assisting parental disputes rather than working directly with children, so her next step was with the Commission for Children. She became an investigator, conducted reviews and was able to make improvements in the area of child protection and safety.

Following this, Jeannie moved to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman and worked on investigation in schools, universities, TAFE, health and prisons throughout the state. She stayed there for more than 10 years. Jeannie's career then expanded to mediation, aiming to resolve issues without going to court.

"For students looking at a career in law, I would advise them to set aside everything they think being a lawyer is: prestige, money, lights. It really is not like you see on television!" Jeannie says that students considering a degree in law should connect with people in the profession, from legal secretaries, HR or lawyers themselves and ask what the profession is like. It could be more than five years of investment in your education, and that is a lot of time and money if you find you don't like it. As well, "studying law and practicing law are very different."
So, connect.

When Jeannie started her own business, she wanted to be known for the core values of integrity, confidentiality and responsiveness. She recalls that she learnt the value of how responding to someone can impact them when she was a new student at COC. She was cared for as an individual and has taken that into her career, making a positive impact on everyone she meets.

Jeannie loves to travel and enjoys exploring within Australia but also loves to go overseas at least once a year. In fact, she likes to welcome the New Year in a different country every year. Her favourite place is Quebec in Canada where she recalls being at an open-air concert surrounded by ice sculptures at minus 23 degrees. "It was too cold to even think, but it was brilliant!" Of course, travel won't be going ahead in 2020 with the closed borders, but Jeannie will still enjoy the dreaming and planning process.

If you would like to speak to Jeannie about a career in law, investigation, or mediation, please contact the College and we can connect you.

SIEVERTS
mediation consultancy

Andrew Geeves

Class of 1998
Architect, Husband, Father

Andrew is one of eight children, so the Geeves name is well known across the Citipointe campus. At school, Andrew was interested in technical drawing and woodwork but was not clear about what he wanted to do as a career until one of his teachers suggested architecture. After Year 12, he was accepted into the University of Queensland where he completed his Bachelor of Design Studies. His early work involved production drawings and on-site learning. He also worked on projects around health and aged care facilities.

After a year of work, Andrew travelled through South America and Europe and later worked in London for a year and a half. His work involved retail and shopping precincts as well as some work outside London and in Iceland, including town centre planning, commercial projects and being on the construction site. “I think one of the things that I really enjoy about being an architect is how you get to be involved in some of the earliest decisions about a project and then you work on it the whole way through

Cradle Mountain Visitor Centre - photograph by Rob Burnett

until it's finished and people move in."

He knew he wanted to complete his architecture qualifications which would require two more years of study. After living in London, Andrew decided to move somewhere smaller, which is how he ended up at the University of Tasmania. His first official architecture role was based in Launceston. He enjoyed living in the smaller town but decided to move to Hobart and join a new small architecture firm, Cumulus Studio. They have grown and now have offices in Hobart, Launceston, Melbourne and Adelaide. "We get to do a lot of interesting work. I've worked on some really interesting projects and recently got to lead some fairly big, high-profile jobs." Andrew's portfolio includes the Devil's Corner Winery on the east coast of Tasmania and the Cradle Mountain Visitor Centre which was several years in the making.

Andrew recalls how the values of his schooling years translate to his career: "At school there was always a focus on principles and ethics and responsibility to others and community. I feel like in my work and career and in general, this has given me an understanding of social responsibility and being a good citizen."

His advice to students interested in a career in architecture is to "do as much as you can to understand what's involved. Try to get some experience or visit some architects to understand the job. A lot of people don't finish architecture studies and a lot of people don't continue working as architects after their studies. It's not an easy course. It's long!"

Andrew is married to Anna and they have a three-year-old daughter, Stacey. While parenting is a major focus nowadays, Andrew and Anna have enjoyed rock climbing together, Andrew has been surfing recently, and they like spending time in the vegetable garden and beekeeping.

Andrew talks of his large extended family – he is fifth of the eight children. "There's a bit of a pecking order and you don't just get everything handed to you on a plate. Personally, I don't know how my parents did it. I think they're crazy, but they're very dedicated and family is their life and their passion. They're wonderful, caring parents and I think we all turned out pretty normal which is probably quite a credit to them.

For more information about Andrew's work, visit cumulus.studio/

Tim Mccullough

Class of 2002
Business owner, Mountain bike enthusiast, Husband, Father

Tim began his school-based carpentry apprenticeship through TAFE when he was in Year 11 at COC. This involved one day per week working alongside his carpenter father. Upon finishing school, the apprenticeship continued during which time his best mate, Michael, who had also been a COC student, started a bike shop from his garage. He needed a hand to keep the shop going, so Tim started helping him out. "We'd work our apprenticeships through the day, and then do the bike shop until the late hours of the night, and then back to work the next day." He finally had his apprenticeship signed off, and the very next day he told his Dad, "Sorry, I'm out of here!"

"At that stage we were turning over enough that we knew we could afford to get an actual shop front and pay rent. So, we opened a store at Annerley in Brisbane and I continued to work there for several years." For a short time, they had another store in Browns Plains but sold that off and ended up specialising in mountain bikes as they decided to do what they did best and do it well. They saw a potential market in online sales, so Mountain Bikes Direct was born. Eventually, they sold the Annerley store and moved to online retail full-time.

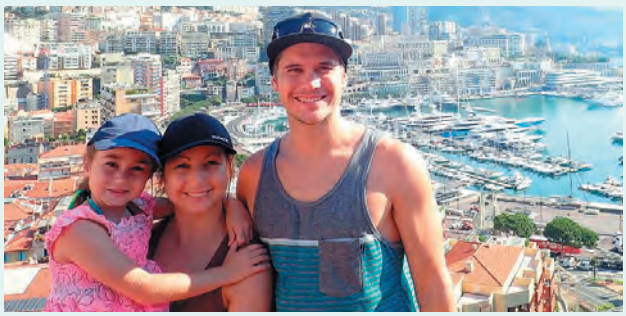
When Tim moved to Quebec with his Canadian wife, Mel, he was able to manage the online store from there. "It was a big decision. At that stage, the bricks and mortar store was far outperforming the online store, but we saw how online was growing." So, bravely, they put all their eggs in the one digital basket and went for it.

Tim and Michael now have eighteen staff who work remotely across the country and are expanding into New Zealand. "There are lots of pros and cons to running your own business. The pros are, you do have the freedom to decide, the freedom to push it in the direction you want. You can work as many hours as you like, which is a massive double-edged sword, because you can easily work 60 - 70 hours a week. Lately we've been lucky enough to cut back on our hours, but we worked ridiculous hours for a very, very long time."

"We just like helping people out and seeing them outside on their bikes. It's always a good feeling to get someone stoked on a new part, a new bike, whatever it may be and see them out there enjoying it and have them come back and tell you, 'Oh man, that thing you sold me is so great, it's improved my riding and I'm having so much more fun.' I think doing something that is healthy, active and is a good life choice for people is rewarding as well."

When Tim was in school, he always though he would follow in his father's footsteps and be a carpenter for life, but he has found much joy in an e-commerce industry that helps people with their hobby. "Everyone's just so stoked to be outside, out in the bush, on their bikes. The vibe is always just so good when you head out for a ride – the people are happy, they're doing what they love, this is their pastime. For myself and for so many other people, it's a great stress relief as well. If you're smashing down a track, you can't really be thinking about what's going on at work, you've got to be concentrating pretty hard on your riding. And it's amazing what that does just to separate you from

Mountain biking



The McCullough Family

everything else that's going on in the world."

When asked to give some advice to current students, Tim acknowledges that, "I think there are probably a lot of people who are at a similar stage that I was, where I had relatively good common sense but certainly wasn't a scholarly, super intelligent sort of person. I think there can be a bit of a stigma that, 'Oh, you have to go to university if you ever want to be something; you have to do all this study.' And it's not necessarily true. What tradesmen are getting paid nowadays is unbelievable and they can be very successful. So, my advice would be, don't let yourself be pushed into university if you don't think sitting down for another three or four years to study is you. Because there are a lot of other opportunities out there beyond that!"

With the events of 2020, Tim wasn't sure how the restrictions would impact the business, but they have continued to do very well as more people are rediscovering the outdoors and mountain biking. He says that owners and managers are realising that people don't necessarily need to work from an office. "We've got a guy at the moment who's currently kitting out his big van to do a trip around the country and he'll work the whole time."

As well as completing a Business Management course and seeking advice from his very intelligent brother, Daniel (Class of 1998), Tim puts his success down to having a customer service mindset: "What would my customer want me to be doing to be the best mountain bike shop we can be? I think that's a really good lens to view decision-making." As he looks back over the last 20 years, Tim says he is grateful for the support of his family. "They are currently spread throughout south-east Queensland and everyone gets along really well."

Tim says that the characteristics that were ingrained in school – honesty, integrity, hard work – are crucial to running his business. Reflecting on his time at COC, Tim recalls how Mr Condon, Graphics and Computer Studies teacher, had "incredible faith in what I could do as a person, even when I probably didn't see it." This has impacted how Tim manages his staff, empowering them, not micromanaging. One of his secrets is "to employ people who are smarter than us and give them the ball and let them run with it."

Tim enjoys mountain biking, not only as his work, but also for fun with his family, despite one bad crash where he broke 17 bones! He met his wife, Mel, about 15 years ago when she was in Australia backpacking. They have an 8-year-old daughter who enjoys spending time with her dad on the mountain bike tracks of the Sunshine Coast hinterland. Tim laughs as he reveals that he also takes the bikes on family holidays as often as he can as a way to explore. He has been to many countries including New Zealand, Canada, USA and throughout Europe. His travels have taught him how varied cultures can be. He also loves camping, boating, rock climbing and spending time with his mates.

Carpentry is still a large part of Tim's life and he continues to build and design furniture as is evidenced by the beautiful timber work scattered around his garden and home.

Tim's advice for students: "If you are looking at starting your own business, start early. The stakes are so much lower when you're 18, 19 or 20. If you fail at it, who cares? What have you lost? I'd always rather have a go and fail than look back and think, "Oh, I had such a good opportunity there, I wish I'd had a crack!""

You can discover more about Tim and Mountain Bikes Direct by visiting their website: mtbdirect.com.au

Jeff and Monique Alexis

Jeff Alexis
Class of 2002
Radiology Registrar, Husband, Father

Monique Alexis (née Speaight)
Class of 2004
Physiotherapist, Wife, Mother

When Monique (née Speaight) graduated from Citipointe in 2004, she first studied Human Movement and then transferred to Physiotherapy at the University of Queensland as she'd wanted to be a physiotherapist from a young age. She started working for Queensland Health and moved around, working at different hospitals as husband Jeff's studies demanded. Monique specialises in Neurological Physiotherapy, working with patients who have experienced brain injuries, strokes, spinal cord injuries or progressive neurological disorders. More recently, she has been working at the University of Queensland at the Neurological Ageing and Balance clinic, combining her passion for helping patients with teaching 4th year physiotherapy students.

Jeff Alexis studied radiography at Queensland University of Technology upon completion of Year 12. He worked as a radiographer for five years, before beginning his medical degree at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney and Melbourne. On completion of his medical studies, he commenced his internship at the Gold Coast University Hospital, and earlier this year was accepted into the radiology speciality training program which is a further five years of training. Jeff takes pride in his work and says, "I like the fact that you're helping people who may be at their lowest point and that's one of the key things that got me into medicine in the first place. But I also like the technology side of radiology and marrying those two together is interesting, challenging and a really rewarding type of career."

Monique explains further: "To get into radiology was a massive thing for our family. It took years of hard work and dedication and sacrifice to get to that point." She says that the extended family has also helped, especially once the children came along.

Jeff and Monique really care about people, and this is the motivating driver for their careers. Monique says, "I think that intrinsically comes from the fact that we like to help people and we just want to know that we've done the best we can for them."

When asked about influential teachers from school, Jeff remembers that Mr Condon was someone who was very supportive and encouraging, and happy to assist with any problem, personal or academic. "He's probably one of the people who influenced me the most during school."

Monique's fondest memory of school was her cohort of friends and sitting on the bridge every lunchtime. She still has friends from school that she sees regularly. For Jeff, "Being involved in all the different performance groups – stage band, concert band, choir – playing the saxophone" are happy memories.

Of their courtship, Monique and Jeff knew of each other at school, but were several years apart. They officially met later at a family event and the love story grew from there. They have now been together for 15 years, married for 10.

Monique remembers Mr Bettinson from school: "He took such an active interest in who you were and where you were going, and I suppose I can't really speak highly enough of him. He really pushed everyone to be the best version of themselves." She also recalls that Mr Wolfik introduced her to orienteering. He encouraged her to pursue it outside of school, and she participated in some district and state carnivals. This instilled a love of the outdoors and Monique more recently has started doing adventure races. These races are a combination of paddling, mountain biking and trail running. Participants need to orienteer to different checkpoints over the course of the race. She recently participated in her first 6-hour race and

looks forward to working up to the 12 and 24 hour ones after that.

Monique serves as a medical classifier for the sport of para-triathlon. “I take athletes who have a disability and assess them and put them into a class level (in which they compete). This volunteer opportunity took me to Korea last year but, of course, all the 2020 events have been cancelled due to COVID. Being a classifier is a small way that I can help put back a little bit into the community.”

Although Jeff’s study, work and family fill most of his time, he enjoys playing touch football and soccer when he can.

Jeff and Monique talk about the juggle that is career and family. It is particularly difficult when Jeff has to be away for up to six months at a time or drive an hour each way to the Gold Coast Hospital. With Monique working at UQ and two young children, life is certainly busy.

Jeff’s advice for anyone wanting to pursue a career in medicine is, “Don’t give up too easily. If you have a goal of where you want to go, just get advice from lots of different people who are already in it, who have done the journey before. Because that will help you frame how you’re going to attack the problem and also just give you some support as well.” Jeff sat the medical entrance exam three times before being accepted, so encourages people to persevere.

Monique agrees and acknowledges that both of them had to work hard at school to get good grades, but she says that Physiotherapy is a wonderful career and is flexible around family life.

Monique says that, “Having the Christian grounding in high school was really good. Knowing that you have a hope and a future to base your decisions on is so reassuring because life is tricky, and the journey has its ups and downs. And I think that if you didn’t have that Christian basis, you could very easily lose hope or lose drive to keep going with things. It gives you a network as well and a community who usually are really encouraging to keep going.” Jeff agrees and adds that, “A good foundation helps to make good decisions.”

Jeff and Monique’s siblings also went to Citipointe and are working in a variety of fields including teaching, IT, medicine and graphic design. Jeff and Monique are grateful to their extended family for their ongoing support in helping them pursue their dreams.

Jess Teunis (née Brown)

Class of 2003
Mother, Hairdresser, Basketball fanatic

In Year 11 Jess began a school-based hairdressing apprenticeship which allowed her to begin her career journey. By Year 12 she knew that this was her calling. She would spend Wednesdays at TAFE during school, and then another three years full time to complete her training. Jess explains that she went to a birthday party for a friend from school whose mother was a hairdresser. This led to support for her apprenticeship and Jess's first job. She started on the Saturday morning, straight after the Year 12 formal!

Jess says that her two bosses had come from a very high quality salon so they provided an excellent training ground. "They were quite strict, but they were so nurturing at the same time." Once she completed her apprenticeship, Jess moved straight into managing the salon. She had proven her loyalty and remained in that role for seven years, until she was 30 weeks pregnant with her twins. She had married Julian quite young, so at age 22 she was married with seven years hairdressing experience and twins on the way.

The plan was for Jess to be a full-time mum, but when the twins were six months old, she started seeing clients again from home. Her third daughter was born three years later.

When Jess talks about school, her face lights up and the word basketball follows closely. Jess had lots of fun and several different friendship groups, one of which revolved around basketball. She tells the story of The Starting Five, five students in Year 5 who wanted to play basketball. Coached by Mr Webb, there ended up being enough students playing by the time they were in high school to form a school team. They also played on a representative team that competed in Ballarat, Victoria. Jess still keeps in touch with The Starting Five and, with the help of social media, has reconnected with others from her school years. Jess continued to play basketball until recently and her girls play, so the whole family is passionate about the game.

Jess recalls a significant time in her schooling life. "I had a bit of a bad attitude in school. I wasn't the best academically. But one teacher made a big difference. He said something encouraging to me. He was singing my praises and said I would go far in life. He gave me just the encouragement I needed at just the right time. This was a turning point in my life. My attitude and behaviour changed. From that time, I was no longer naughty, just talkative!"

Jess has long ties with Citipointe, with all three siblings attending. Her mother, a Citipointe Secondary teacher, has tried to retire several times, but continues to teach with passion. Jess believes in Christian education and her girls attend a Christian school in her local area. "I think it was very important having the Christian values at school, the friends, the Christian families. Even now, having my girls at a Christian school is really good."

Being a hairdresser requires so much more than just doing hair. "You're a little bit of a therapist." I had the privilege of being involved with an outreach program at my church where they bussed women in from local shelters for some pampering. "Some women would come in shaking, like whole body shaking. They'd sometimes come with bruises and it was terrible. But just to see their faces after a simple haircut or when I straightened or curled their hair, they actually saw the beauty in themselves. It was pretty cool. One said afterwards, "I feel beautiful". Some people just need to be heard and have someone listen. Some are lonely, some don't want to talk – I don't mind either."

One of the things Jess loves about her job is colour corrections. "When the hair has been really ruined, then four or five hours later, there is such improvement – it's very rewarding."

Jess travelled to London, The Netherlands and New Zealand for work before children and she and her husband Julian, with their family, have travelled quite a bit overseas, swimming with turtles in Hawaii, skiing in New Zealand. They also like camping, and Jess loves fishing. She loves to get out on the boat for a few hours of quiet time.

You can see Jess' work here:

Instagram – @jesshairstylist
Facebook – The Hair Room by Jess Teunis

The Teunis family

Ben Cherry

Class of 2004
Pastor, Husband, Father, Leader

Ben Cherry loved school. He remembers playing handball at lunchtimes in early high school, the treat of tuckshop on Fridays, good times at chapel with Mr Cobb and ruining too many pairs of uniform pants playing sport on the oval! He was inspired by his Business teacher at school, Mr Bettinson, so did a Business degree at Christian Heritage College majoring in marketing.

In 2008 he commenced as the assistant youth pastor at Citipointe Church whilst undergoing an internship at the Citipointe Ministry School. At the end of 2009 under the banner of Scripture Union, he was the chaplain at a local state school for five years, working with children from primary and secondary. He loved being able to support and encourage families in this role and make a great difference, which cemented his passion for service and ministry.

During this time, he also studied a Diploma of Youth Work and a Graduate Diploma of Ministry. By this stage, Ben had married fellow alumnus, Joelle (nee Malengret, Class of 2003), and had become a father to daughter, Genna. Sitting in church one morning he and Joelle heard that a church in Auckland, New Zealand being newly branded as Citipointe, needed a pastor. Usually someone who likes thing to be stable, Joelle leaned over to Ben and bravely said, "Let's go – what an adventure!"

"Of course, it was hard to leave family and friends behind, but we felt a stirring that this was what God wanted us to do. Starting out in New Zealand under the new Citipointe church was scary, exciting, challenging and wonderful all at once. We've learnt so much along the way and are grateful to have such a great team around us so that together we can make a greater difference for Christ.

Ben and his family arrived at the church of about a 120 people and have spent the last 5 years discovering the New Zealand culture, pastoring and serving the wonderfully multicultural congregation, and growing in his leadership gifting. Ben and Joelle welcomed their second child, Samuel, and are excited to announce that baby number three is due in 2021.

Ben wants to be the best leader he can be, and with God's guiding and an attitude of lifelong learning, he is inspired to continue his growth journey to have a greater impact. Now with 250 church members and four staff, along with numerous volunteers and teams, he loves to empower those around him to use their strengths and gifts to serve God. Seeing people coming to faith, deepening their relationship with God, and building positive relationships with one another as a result, is one of the joys of being a pastor. "I particularly recall one family who came to know Jesus, all were baptised, I conducted their wedding and now they are a shining light in our community serving others and experiencing the joy of knowing God."

Ben's four thoughts for Christian leadership:

Self-leadership: If others copied your lifestyle would they be better off, more like Christ and flourishing in their purpose? Be a leader that others want to follow.

Integrity: Character trumps gifting. Focus on building your integrity not building your image.

Empower others: Great teams build great organisations. Be someone who looks to involve and empower others to flourish.

Be Christ-centred: Chase after God. He will never fail or abandon you. He loves you and his way is the best way to live.

The Cherry Family

Ben and Joelle Cherry

Along similar lines, when asked what advice he has for current students, Ben says, "Look to do what's right, not just what is popular. And dream big!"

He had several teachers from school who believed in and encouraged him. He remembers being in a bit of trouble one day and Mrs Mills spoke to him "not to get cross or tell me off, but to inspire me to believe in myself." Mr Condon was also a great inspiration. Ben encourages students to take every opportunity offered at school: "Make the most of them".

Ben is kept busy with work but also enjoys playing basketball (his 6ft 8in height helps), tinkering with guitar and spending as much time with the family as he can. His wife Joelle is an occupational therapist by training, is currently enjoying being mum and co-pastoring alongside Ben in women's ministry, events and church administration.

Ben's advice to students: "God is an expert at turning lumps of clay into masterpieces. The key is to place your life in the Potter's hands. You will be amazed what He can do in and through your life."

Daniel Harris

Class of 2007
Banker, Model

Keep life interesting and try new things. Once you've found your passion, pursue it and always finish strong.

Following in the footsteps of his grandad and uncle, Daniel took a gap year after Year 12 to gain some experience in the finance industry to see if he enjoyed it. He began a Business degree at the University of Queensland the following year. While studying at UQ he developed an interest in fashion textiles, so decided to make a big change and move to Melbourne's RMIT to study Applied Science majoring in Textiles and International Trade.

During this time, Daniel was signed to fashion modelling agencies in Brisbane and Melbourne which helped pay the bills through his studies. "I was pretty young when I moved, around 20 years old, trying to navigate the change between adolescence and adulthood, managing bills and rent while studying as well. That forced me to grow up quite quickly."

Daniel's modelling soon took off and he was travelling to Sydney two or three times a month while also working in Melbourne. The turning point was when he walked the David Jones runway show in Sydney, which is the largest, most prestigious show in Australia. This runway turned out to be his gateway to the international market. Top UK based agency Storm Models sponsored Daniel to move to London when he had a few months left on his degree. "I submitted my last assignment, sadly said goodbye to everyone, packed up my apartment in Melbourne and flew over to London to give it a shot."

Daniel arrived off the plane, caught the Tube with his luggage to the agency and "later that night they took me to where I would be living. It was actually in the house that the agency had bought for Kate Moss in the 1990s, so that was quite cool!"

Soon Daniel was booked for three shows in London fashion week, including a runway for the Royal family's tailor, Geives & Hawkes. He also walked for a Savile Row show held in the Winston Churchill War Rooms underneath London alongside some well-known celebrities. From there, he travelled to Milan and worked for other famous designers and publications including Ermenegildo Zegna. "I had a very clear goal in mind so I was at the gym two hours a day, running 50 kilometres a week, and maintained a strict diet. All the training and preparation that I did prior to moving overseas led up to being in that situation living in Milan and casting in front of Giorgio Armani. It's pretty crazy going from it being a dream in your head and something you're working towards to actually being in that moment."

"My favourite memory was travelling to four different countries in four days working across Europe. The best part about it was that I'd get a call from one of my agents and I'd never really know what country I'd be taken to next, so it was a really exciting time of my life."

Daniel returned to Australia for summer and while he was at the Gold Coast surfing with some friends, he received a call from his agent in Milan saying he'd booked a job in Abu Dhabi. So that night he flew out, went to Abu Dhabi and shot the global campaign for Etihad Airlines over the course of a week.

It was at the airport on the journey home from this amazing experience that he observed different business people walking around in suits, catching flights, and he thought that maybe he would like to get back into the finance industry and build a career in something that was a bit more longstanding.

When he returned, he decided to study a second degree in commerce and finance and moved back to Melbourne. He started a job with a small boutique wealth management firm and worked there as an Associate while he studied full time at Deakin University. "It was a pretty grinding two and a half years of my life. I would basically get into the office around 6 am, start listening to lectures – everyone else I worked with would come in around 8 o'clock, then I'd start my normal work. Around 5:30 pm, when everyone else started going home, I'd walk down to the local Coles, grab some groceries, make dinner in the office, eat, shower, down a black coffee or two and then just start studying. I'd probably leave at around midnight or so each night and just kept doing that until I finished the degree."

At the end of this degree, Daniel saw an opportunity at Macquarie Group in their Private Banking division. After a gruelling screening and interview process, he started with Macquarie working in a team of eight, managing $2 billion of assets for private Australian and international clients. He loved the entrepreneurial mindset that the company fosters. He was able to connect with successful leaders within the organisation, some of whom are now his closest mentors.

Not to rest for too long, Daniel is studying again, this time for his Master of Finance. He loves the technical financial analysis aspect combined with relationship development dealing with a range of clients. Daniel says that his fiancé, Emma, sometimes pokes fun at him as he finds it relaxing to watch finance documentaries and read textbooks in his downtime.

Reminiscing about his twelve years at Citipointe, Daniel says his best memories are centred around friendships and sport. "I loved playing soccer. I was really involved in soccer and our grade had a really competitive team, so we were lucky to win a few of the competitions and travel all over Queensland playing against different schools. I was also involved in swimming, cross country, athletics, district volleyball, and there was also a surfing team back then. I'm very thankful to have attended such a great school that supports its students' interests, providing many opportunities to grow."

Daniel recalls the impact that advice from Mr Tsimboukis, current Head of Humanities, had on him. "He opened up my mind in English and made me understand that I was quite intellectually inclined and I could achieve great results if I focused and put my mind to it." This was the start of Daniel's academic journey.

Daniel and Emma plan to marry in 2021, with a very long guest list due to Emma's Irish heritage and large family. Emma is a lawyer for a Melbourne based firm and, like Daniel, values her professional career working hard towards achieving big life goals.

Daniel's family has had a significant part to play in shaping his life. "My father is the hardest working person I know, and my mother has a very gentle, kind loving spirit – both my parents have helped me immensely over the years and shared in my successes. They have always been there in the background supporting me and cheering me on! I love my family and am very thankful. My parents really saw the benefit of good quality education and I was able to thank them recently for the sacrifices they made in their lives to send their children to Citipointe for 12 years – a really outstanding effort on their behalf and we will always be grateful. Daniel's sister, Felicity (Class of 2005), is a Film Producer and Teacher and his brother, Jonathon (Class of 2011), is a Mechatronic Engineer.

Daniel is grateful for the Christian values displayed at school and says that in his industry, it is important to be as considerate to people as possible because "you always end up being reconnected with that same person somewhere down the line".

Advice for current students: "Keep life interesting by trying new things in your early years out of school. Once you've found your passion, pursue it and always finish strong, never do anything half-heartedly. I've been fortunate to live in six countries now, and it all came down to taking a chance, getting offered an opportunity and saying yes. Gaining new experiences and meeting inspiring people along the way have helped me to understand and develop my long-term passion, providing me with the tools and skills to grow and achieve.

Daniel now plans to move overseas when he finishes his Masters degree and pursue a career in international markets with Macquarie Group while his fiancé Emma pursues a career in international law.

Emily Muller (née Easterby)

Class of 2009
Marketer, Wife, Mother, Storyteller

Emily graduated from Citipointe in 2009 after completing Year 13 in the NOVA program. With a passion for the arts and storytelling, she chose to study a Bachelor of Film, Television and New Media at QUT. As her first year of university came to an end, she was offered a marketing internship at Microsoft. And so began a career she never expected to have, but really enjoyed.

"Working at Microsoft was incredible but also a steep learning curve. Soft skills are highly valued at Microsoft, so whilst I had a lot of catching up to do in my knowledge around sales and marketing, I quickly learned to be curious, take risks and handle ambiguity."

"In my time at Microsoft I had the opportunity to travel to Ireland, Spain and the USA. I met other employees who were part of Microsoft's graduate and internship programs, which was an incredible opportunity to learn from other cultures and best practices. I had the opportunity to hear both Bill Gates and Sataya Nadella speak live – both moments that I will never forget.

In 2013 Emily married and the couple relocated to New Zealand where Emily started in a new role at Microsoft as a Retail Channel Marketing Manager. In this role, she executed local marketing activities for brands including Windows, Xbox and Surface.

Two years later they welcomed their beautiful daughter Sofia into the world. Not long after that they moved back to Brisbane where Emily had a career change and commenced working in the not-for-profit sector. "This was an exciting opportunity, as I had always wanted to be able to use my storytelling skills to make a difference. I had never quite anticipated how." But God had a much bigger plan. In 2017, she become the Marketing and Communications Director for Watoto Australia. This was a dream role for Emily, and there was many a day where she cried happy tears, thinking about what a blessing it was. Watoto is a charity that supports over 3,000 vulnerable women and children in Uganda, founded by Gary and Marilyn Skinner. Emily had the opportunity to go over and visit the projects that year, and says it was one of the best experiences of her life. "The impact that Watoto is having on the community in Uganda is incredible."

In this role, Emily looked after fundraising and donor communications, and she also managed the marketing and PR of the Watoto Children's Choir tour in Australia. "This was so much fun! I helped coordinate radio and television interviews for the choir, and even had a couple myself. Not only did the choir raise much needed awareness, they also brought incredible joy and hope to over 40,000 Australians each year. It was an honour to be a part of it."

In 2019 she finished up at Watoto, and joined Data#3 as a Marketing Specialist, managing campaigns in partnership with Microsoft, Cisco, HP and Lenovo. "This has been a season of upskilling and refining my craft as a marketer and storyteller, and I am learning so much every day. It's also been a job that I have been able to do remotely during the pandemic, and I've been incredibly grateful for that flexibility, especially as a mum."

This year Emily's daughter started in Prep at Citipointe. "It was quite an emotional moment for me, seeing her put on that uniform and enter my old school gate. She often asks me questions about what it was like at Citipointe in the 'olden days'.

Visiting Microsoft Head Office in Seattle USA

One of the things I liked most about being at Citipointe was knowing that I had supportive teachers around me who weren't just Christians in name but lived and breathed their faith every day. When it came to choosing a school for my daughter, that was what was most important to me. I wanted her to have the same support from teachers who would sow seeds of hope into her life, and values that would become her foundation."

"I think some of my best memories at school were participating in school musicals and school camps. I also really enjoyed the NOVA mission trip we went on to Fiji when I was in Year 11. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn about another culture and to be a part of the ministry there. We prayed for the sick and saw them healed. It was incredible and really opened my eyes to the power of the Holy Spirit."

Emily recalls the care and support she received at school and is grateful for the teachers who encouraged her and her peers to take risks to really grow their gifts and talents. She mentions Ms Pratt, Mr Condon and Mr Cobb who were "always there to encourage me in my faith."

It is wonderful to welcome Emily as a parent of the College this year.

Emily Muller on her daughter's first day of school at Citipointe

Katie Lane

Class of 2009
Doctor

Katie Lane finished school in 2009 and embarked on her journey towards medicine. She began with a science degree at the University of Queensland majoring in biomedical science. This cemented her desire to pursue medicine and she began to study for the medical entrance exams. She did her honours year, worked in research labs, took a year off, and was then accepted into medicine at Griffith University's Gold Coast campus. She ended up sitting the GAMSAT (medical entrance exam) six times, but her perseverance paid off.

Katie is grateful for the many experiences she had whilst studying. She worked in an engineering firm, as a research assistant, in retail, and was able to study abroad as part of her science degree. Although she didn't get in to medicine straightaway, she is thankful for the many opportunities that have contributed to her story. She recalls her overseas study experience in Vancouver, Canada. Whilst the University of British Columbia is ranked very high in world standings, she was able to manage the load easily,

Katie on the rocks

leaving time to explore and enjoy the local offerings and found herself skiing in Whistler most weekends.

In 2015, Katie began her Bachelor of Medicine. This took another four years of study: three on the Gold Coast and one at the Sunshine Coast Hospital. Following this, she was ready for something different again and enjoyed an intern year in Cairns. "It was great to finally be getting paid after so many years of study." She found the unique experience at the Cairns Hospital a bit of a culture shock. She was treating patients with diseases that she hadn't seen before and was exposed to areas such as tropical medicine, indigenous health and refugees with unique conditions. As a first-year intern she found this challenging, but the supportive environment helped to develop her compassion and care of individuals. She completed her rotations in orthopaedics, obstetrics and gynaecology, renal medicine, general surgery and emergency.

Katie is currently on rotations through different departments of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital as a Resident while she decides which area she may like to specialise in. For now, she is enjoying the special moments she shares one-on-one with patients.

When asked for advice regarding a career in medicine, Katie says, "You don't have to be a genius to study medicine. The difference between medical school and a science degree is really just a matter of perseverance. In some ways I enjoyed medicine more because you know what you are learning is relevant. And I think you don't have to be great at chemistry or maths or physics to do medicine. I'm not very good at any of those. Once you're actually working, it's your human skills that people actually appreciate more, and that's what gets you jobs in the end, that you're a caring and good person. Obviously, you have to do the medicine, but the actual science of it is not the hardest thing about medicine when you're a junior. What makes you good or bad in your seniors' eyes is whether you're personable really, and intuitive and organised."

Katie recalls fondly her many hours spent in art class at school and her teacher, Mr Stephens. She says that art was a reprieve from the maths and science subjects she took. She also laughs as she remembers Year 10 drama. She was quieter back then and preferred to work behind the scenes. For one play, she was tasked with writing and directing the show, which was a surprise as "sometimes the quiet kids can get overlooked." She was grateful for the opportunities she was given and that the teachers saw her potential. Mrs Bornhutter, now Head of Maths, played a significant part in Katie doing so well in Year 12. She encouraged Katie to reach her potential and to believe in herself which led to her thinking that, "Oh, maybe I'm actually smart enough to do medicine."

One aspect of school life that Katie has taken into her medical career is not judging people. She remembers that people were accepted for who they were at Citipointe. "I was a nerdy kid, and I remember in Year 7, I used to bring fact books to school and read them at lunchtime . . . and my friends would always just go along with it." Katie uses experiences like this to accept and have empathy for everyone. The more she speaks with her patients, she realises that some people have had terrible things happen to them. "You can make a huge difference just in the small things. There's much more capacity to make a difference for the people who really need it."

In her gap year between studying science and medicine, Katie travelled around Europe which she says taught her how to travel well. She later worked in South Africa in trauma and emergency medicine as part of her medical degree, then used her travel experience to brave a road trip through Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Congo and Namibia.

Katie's best friends now are still her friends from school. They are spread all over the country but they try to holiday together occasionally. For now, she is enjoying the growth and development in her career and encourages students to persevere and work hard to pursue their goals.

Joseph Nolan

Class of 2012
PhD Student, Sport Researcher

Be the best that you can be in the area that you're passionate about.

Upon finishing school in 2012, Joseph was inspired to start a Bachelor of Business at Griffith University and he recalls that his Business Management teacher at Citipointe, Mr Bettinson, helped him find a passion for the subject. Joseph enjoyed the generic business subjects in the first year of his degree, but when it came to selecting a major, Sport Management was an area that stood out to him. Spending a great deal of time during his teenage years as a track and field athlete, the combination of sport and business excited him and he chose to double major in this as well as Marketing. After completing his Bachelor degree, he decided to undertake a further year of study to complete a research Honours. He was encouraged to do this by several of his university lecturers and also thought that it would look great on his résumé. Little did he know that research would become something that he would grow passionate about as a career path moving forward into the future.

"God has continually opened different doors in my life, some of them completely unexpected. I never would have imagined that I would become a researcher. I remember back in school, dreading whenever research was needed for assignments but now I'm absolutely loving it! It's a chance for me to think creatively about problems. It certainly hasn't been easy, but it's been really rewarding and enjoyable so far."

"My Honours project was my first opportunity to work directly with sports in a research capacity. From my experience as an athlete and a coach I had gained insight into some ongoing challenges within my own sport of athletics and I began to recognise that research was an avenue for me to investigate these problems, work with sport managers, and make a real difference." Joseph was awarded the Griffith University Medal for academic excellence at the end of his Honours year, which is an award presented to the top performing honours student across the university. "I felt very honoured and encouraged to receive this recognition for my work and it re-affirmed that I'm in the place where God wants me."

After completion of his Honours dissertation, and with his new found passion for research, Joseph felt led to embark on a PhD. His thesis focuses on stakeholder relationships in sport, and his overall goal for the research project is to "develop an assessment tool that sport organisations can use to measure, and subsequently enhance, their relationships with internal stakeholders." Joseph's research is the first of its kind to examine an array of sport stakeholder relationships from multiple perspectives within the one study. He recently presented his initial findings online at a European sport management conference and stated that it was a fantastic opportunity to share his research and network with other PhD candidates from around the world.

"I've also been incredibly blessed to have received financial support from both Griffith University and the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) throughout my studies in the form of scholarships.

Joseph and Frances

The QAS have been instrumental in helping connect me with sports in order to conduct my research and I've loved working with like-minded people who share my passion for sport. I'm sure a number of people from Citipointe still remember me as "that fast Sports Captain who always wore long stripy red and white socks to represent Asher on athletics day". I was very committed to athletics for over half my life and I had Olympic aspirations from a very young age. I was 11 when I first started training quite seriously. I got a coach, joined a club and started competing at Little Athletics. When I was 13, 14 and 15, the hard work paid off and I was fortunate enough to make the Queensland team and compete at nationals. I won some gold medals there and broke a couple of Queensland records in the sprint events. At that stage we were quite hopeful and ambitious in regard to my future career as an elite athlete but in the years after this I had a number of serious injuries that put me out of competition. I tried to get back to competing at the same high level but my body could no longer do what it used to and I realised that my career as an athlete was no longer going to happen."

He says that it was a tough realisation at the time, but upon reflection he recognised that God was in it all. The years he dedicated to being an athlete helped him find the career path that he is on now and the life skills and relationships that he developed during that time were invaluable. "I think it's good to plan ahead and have goals, but I also think it's

WE HAVE MOVED

TO A NEW LOCATION IN WESTFIELD CARINDALE

(Near Westfield bus interchange entrance & opposite Reject Shop)

Dedicated & caring team of GPs, nurses & receptionists.

General GP needs, all immunisations including school catch up, skin checks, health checks, injuries & workplace medicals, IV iron & vitamin infusions.

Bulk billing for aged care pensioners, DVA, children & Citipointe Christian College parents & staff.

Annual walk in flu immunisation clinic & workplace immunisations.

New patient's welcome.

HEALTHCARE PLUS Medical Centre

Ph 07 3135 9898

healthcareplusmedical.com.au

Joseph in Year 12 at the Athletics Carnival

really important to be flexible, to re-evaluate, and to pray that God will continue to direct your steps and open the right doors at the right time. It's easy to get caught up in our own plans and expectations, but I've learnt to be more adaptable and keep an eye out for different opportunities that God may be leading me to."

Joseph remembers Citipointe as a school where "teachers really want the best for you and will go out of their way to show that they care." He goes on to say that "I think having a Christian education in my early years, surrounded by teachers and peers that shared my convictions and beliefs, helped strengthen and reinforce my character. Having Christian teachers that are positive role models, who set high moral standards and actually care about you as a person has a significant impact on students. When my sister and I were growing up, our father became very unwell and was unable to work. As a result, my family struggled financially for a number of years. The school discounted our school fees so that we were both able to attend and I'm incredibly thankful for the opportunity to be in that environment when we otherwise wouldn't have been able to."

Joseph advises current students that, "You don't have to have all the answers now. It's okay not to know exactly where you'll be or what you'll be doing straight after school. Make sure that you are pursuing something but be flexible and know that the direction can change over time. Trust in God's plan for your life and pray that He will guide you. His plan will always be better than anything that we can come up with on our own."

Joseph still regularly catches up with some of his high school friends and remembers the camaraderie that was developed over the years. He loves going on outdoor adventures with them and continues to enjoy physical exercise and fitness. But above all he really values the quality time that he gets to spend with his partner Frances as well as his family.

"Family is incredibly important to me. My parents have provided a great example to me of what a strong marriage and a loving, supportive family can look like, and that's something that I look forward to experiencing for myself in the years to come. Ever since I can remember, I've always wanted and dreamed of one day being a great husband and a great dad. And I think that's probably another bit of advice that I would like to give others: don't feel like your ambitions just need to be focused on a career. I think it's an amazing thing to want to be a great sibling, a great son or daughter, a great husband or wife, or a great parent. Don't disregard the desires that God has placed in your heart just because it might not be a flashy career. If I can be known for my strength of character and my love for God and the people around me, that would mean more to me than any worldly accolade or achievement."

In Memoriam

Belinda Farley
(née Lindridge)

Mrs Belinda Farley
(19/09/1976 - 17/09/2019
aged 42 years young)

Belinda was a student in the class of 93'. She started her schooling at the then Christian Outreach College as a grade 8 student in 1989. Belinda remained at the campus until her grade 12 graduation. She excelled in her studies & was very well respected by her peers & teachers.

Belinda went on to study a Bachelor of early childhood at QUT graduating with Honours in 1997. She taught grade 3 between 1998 & 2013. She was identified as a natural leader & In her latter years, she became Deputy head of Calvary Christian College (formerly LUPS). She was loved & adored by her students & colleagues alike. Furthering her studies, Belinda studied a master's in leadership & Management at the University of Newcastle, graduating with Honours.

2013 was also the year the opportunity arose to move on from her beloved Calvary to AB Patterson College at the Gold Coast. With the move she undertook her role of Deputy Head of junior school, Prep teacher, Pastoral care for teachers, became the Netball coach & expanded her horizons becoming involved in many facets of the school & social operations with the teachers & parents. She was a dedicated teacher & vital member of staff. She was loved for her energy, her intelligence, humour & her quick wit. Her knack & ability to bring the best out in people was an enviable trait.

Belinda's love did not stop at her teaching. She was an avid traveller spending many holidays overseas with her family. She also had a passion for Rugby League & the Brisbane Broncos, holding a season pass for many seasons. She also loved Netball & followed the Qld Firebirds closely holding season passes with her daughter there too.

Belinda, Binny, Bel, B as she was affectionately known is terribly missed by her devastated family who survive her. Her ex school friends have also been left devastated by her death.

Belindas commitment to whatever she put her mind to, be it education, sport, friendship & family will always be fondly remembered. She left her mark on every-thing & person who encountered her. We all will be forever grateful for that & be richer for having known her.

Her legacy will continue through her children & students who were lucky enough to receive her care & influence instilled by her teachings & leadership. Belindas family & close friends maintain a close relationship ensuring our wonderful Belinda will never be forgotten.

Alumni Celebrations

Madison Davis (Class of 2016) married Tom Jarrett in August at the Victoria Park Golf Club.

Dylan Bresnehan (Class of 2012) married Emma (née Swannell) (Class of 2015) on 16 October at a friend's property.

Connor O'Brien (Class of 2014) married Philippa at the Redland Bay Golf Club in November.

Jeffrey Allsopp (Class of 2014) married Ceilidh Dewar in October at Lightspace in Fortitude Valley.

Kimmy Kellum, née Smith, (Class of 2004) and her husband Alex welcomed daughter June this year. A beloved baby sister for Woody.

Sharna Pedersen, nee Stanton, (Class of 2005) and husband Nathan, along with children Tristan, Jezelle and Jazmine are pleased to add Princeton to their family. Welcome little man.

Alvin Chye (Citipointe parent), Grace Bennett (Alumnus - Class 2007)

Offering a complete range of services for the whole family in a caring environment including:

- braces
- wisdom teeth removal
- sleep dentistry for nervous patients
- implants

Find out more at
www.completedentalwynnum.com.au
Preferred providers for
BUPA, MBP, HCF, CBHS, TUH, Westfund

Bastow & Chye
CompleteDental

Two locations Wynnum West & Lota
Call us today (07) 3396 4094

ASTUTE
FINANCE | INSURANCE | WEALTH

$200 donation to Citipointe and cashback when you settle a loan with Denise at Astute.*

As part of the Citipointe Christian College community for the past 25 years, I am proud to assist you with simple solutions for home loans, investment loans, car loans and more, from a choice of over 25 lenders.

I can also help purchase your next car, of any make and model, and have it delivered to your door at a price that could save you thousands of what the dealer may offer you.

At Astute Carindale we are a family business, privately owned, and committed to helping you and your family reach your financial goals.

ASTUTE CARINDALE

DENISE COOK
0434 637 848
denise.cook@astutefinancial.com.au

* Conditions Apply. Minimum loan amount of $250,000. Must be financed through Astute Carindale. Astute Financial Management Pty Ltd ABN 59 093 587 010 | Australian Credit Licence Number 364253

Corporate Alliances – exclusive benefits for the Citipointe Community.

Citipointe Christian College

322 Wecker Road Carindale
Brisbane Queensland 4152 Australia
Phone +61 7 3347 5899 Fax +61 7 3347 5900
email: mail@citipointe.qld.edu.au
Web: citipointe.qld.edu.au

ABN 15 072 238 554
CRICOS Provider Code: 00996F

Connect with us
facebook.com/citipointeccb