Term 2 was a busy, productive and inspiring one at Blacktown Girls High School. Our students continued to represent the school magnificently, excelling in sporting and academic competitions, attending a variety of excursions, showcasing their talents in the creative and performing arts and participating in community projects. Here are some of the major news items featured in this issue:

- Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participated in the Blacktown Arts Centre “Riverstones and Ramifications” exhibition, the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience at UWS Parramatta, the “Cultural Voices” drama showcase at Bankstown Arts Centre, a Mura Mittigar visit, and weekly Yarn Circles.

- Our debating teams in Years 7-10 achieved outstanding results in both the Premier’s Debating Challenge and Sydney Western competitions, earning high praise from the adjudicators.

- Years 8 and 9 French students had the unique opportunity to perform as the French-speaking Greek chorus in a live, professional production of Antigone at the PACT Theatre.

- Year 10 Drama students worked closely with professional Shakespearean actors and developed a live performance based on Macbeth as part of the Bell Shakespeare Actors in Residence Program.

- In sport our students achieved personal bests, with some breaking records and becoming Age Champions, at the Zone Cross Country, Sydney West Cross Country and Zone Athletics competitions, and put in a noteworthy performance at the Futsal Championship in Dural.

Happy reading!
**Cross Country**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, 55 students from Blacktown Girls attended Zone Cross Country at Nurragingy Reserve, Doonside. The girls had a great day, displaying excellent sportsmanship and giving it their all. We achieved the best results we have had for many a year, with 11 students progressing to the Sydney West Cross Country Championships. Holly Cosgrove (Year 11) won her race and is the Zone Age Champion in the 17-yrs event. Well done to all our competitors!

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 11 students competed at the Sydney West Cross Country Championships at Eastern Creek Raceway. Despite the rain and mud, all students completed their events to the best of their ability. Well done, girls!

**Athletics**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 65 students represented Blacktown Girls at the Zone Athletics Carnival at Blacktown International Sportspark. The girls cheered on their friends from all schools and supported each other in their endeavours. A huge congratulations to Silvia Saua (Year 9) who smashed the record for shot put by over a metre. She is now the Zone record holder with a throw of 9.99m. Well done, Silvia! 14 students in total came first or second in their respective events and will be competing at the Sydney West Athletics Carnival in Term 3. A fantastic effort!

**Futsal**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, 15 students from Years 7-9 participated in the Futsal Championships at the Dural Sport and Leisure Centre. We had two teams competing in the U/14s age group, and both teams gave a respectable showing. Unfortunately, neither team made it through to the semi-finals. However, the girls enjoyed their matches and would have played all week if they had their way! The standout player from both teams was Abby De Castro, who defended brilliantly all day. Special mention also goes to Shereen Radwan for scoring 2 goals on her and her sister Neveen’s birthday!
On Tuesday 5 May, classes 8S and 8T were able to participate in a gifted and talented workshop held by the Sydney Jewish Museum in Darlinghurst, accompanied by Ms Thom and Mr Papa. The purpose of this excursion was to further enhance our knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust, which we have been studying for the past term in English. The day commenced with a train ride from Blacktown to Kings Cross. Once the train ride ended, we walked through the quiet streets of Darlinghurst to the museum’s grand entrance.

We were then greeted by our host Marie who led us to a seminar room where we began the theoretical part of our excursion, which included a brief synopsis of the events that occurred before the systematic execution of the “non-Aryan” Jewish population. We also analysed a segment of a German children’s book which displayed a ludicrous negative stereotypical illustration of Jewish people compared to the “robust Aryan man,” and how this essentially brainwashed susceptible youths into believing and agreeing with Adolf Hitler’s warped ideals. Next, we were able to examine a genuine yellow Star of David that European Jews were forced to wear by the Nazis and discussed its significance. At the conclusion of the forum, the perhaps most memorable and interesting part of the day was when we listened to the personal story of a courageous Holocaust survivor named Yvonne. Yvonne is a Czechoslovakian Jew and at the tender age 14 first felt the impacts of the extreme racist antics of Hitler and the Nazis. She told us how she was alienated by her friends and then described the conditions of the Auschwitz concentration camp where she was held against her will and the death march she was forced to undertake. After Yvonne bravely shared the horrors of her experience, we had the opportunity to be inquisitive and ask questions about her life.

Afterwards, our classes were divided into three groups and were assigned tour guides. We were then given a tour of the museum and its exhibits, including “Culture and Continuity: Journey through Judaism,” “Hitler’s Rise to Power,” and “Ghettos and the Camps” which contained genuine artifacts such as newspapers, photographs and an authentic concentration camp uniform. Through these displays we learned about the discrimination Jews faced prior to World War Two and how Hitler rekindled these ideas and applied his own extreme notion of anti-Semitism to isolate and exterminate the Jewish people in Europe. At the completion of the tour, we ate lunch in an adjacent park and took time with friends to reflect and discuss the exhibits and knowledge we acquired. Then, we gathered in the seminar room to once again converse with Marie and delve deeper into the history of the Holocaust, specifically the times when concentration camps were most active, and consider the important issue of morality. For the last half hour of our excursion, we were permitted to explore the complex ourselves and have a chance to thoroughly examine the exhibits. Some of the most unforgettable and striking displays included the “Signs of Life” room which contained letters and postcards from Jewish people living in Europe during the Holocaust, the “Sanctum of Remembrance” and the “Children’s Memorial” which featured a fountain containing droplets of water that represented the exact number of Jewish children who were murdered during the Holocaust.

Overall, we learned a great deal about the Holocaust and Australian Jewish history and had the rare opportunity to meet a Holocaust survivor and hear her important story. On behalf of the students who attended this excursion, I would like to express gratitude to Ms Thom and Mr Papa for organising and chaperoning this trip and to our host Marie for making our stay so incredibly informative.
This term, Blacktown Girls High School’s Years 8 and 9 French classes were provided with the amazing opportunity to perform in a professional production of the play Antigone by Jean Anouith and the Theatre Excentrique company at the PACT Theatre in Erskineville. This opportunity allowed us to expand our knowledge and experiences, and we were able to work with a variety of people from different professions, life experiences and backgrounds.

We were approached by the play’s director, Anna Jahjah, through our French teacher Madame Serret. We were asked to take part in this play as the French-speaking Greek chorus. From there, we worked with Anna and Madame to ensure a perfect performance. We worked many hours on our French and Madame contributed much of her own time to this production, making sure we understood everything clearly. Since the beginning of this experience our understanding of French has widened and we could not be more grateful to have been a part of this project.

Through this experience we have learnt just how much work goes into a dramatic production. So much is accomplished behind the scenes that nobody ever sees. Our hard work and dedication over the weeks paid off, resulting in a worthwhile character-building experience. We built new relationships and strengthened our confidence, diction and knowledge of the French language. This has been an unforgettable project that we will cherish for the rest of our lives.
This term, Mr Papa’s Year 10 Drama class was involved in the Bell Shakespeare Actors in Residence program. The program allows students to work closely with professional Shakespearean performers to refine their acting techniques and delve deeper into Shakespeare’s works through performance, exploring character and theme. Participation in the program was made possible by a generous donation from Deanne Weir, a former executive with Austar who founded the WeirAnderson Foundation, which supports a broad range of causes including the education and empowerment of girls. Shakespeare’s texts were meant to be performed, and the Bell Shakespeare program helps students see the power of Shakespeare through acting on stage. The key text explored this term was Shakespeare’s tragedy *Macbeth*, which Year 10 students were also studying as part of their English course.

The students worked with two energetic, highly imaginative, incredibly knowledgeable actors, Mel and Frankie. Mel and Frankie provided the girls with valuable personal insight into the life of a stage performer and shared their tips and techniques for maintaining confidence, approaching a script, understanding characters and getting the best out of a performance.

The girls’ work with the Bell Shakespeare program was made the subject of an article to be featured in a future issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald*’s arts publication, *Spectrum*. An arts reporter, Linda Morris, and photographer from the publication came to Blacktown Girls to observe a workshop session and interview the girls about their experience. Keep an eye out for the published story in the weeks ahead!

To close out the term, the students performed an original script, titled *An Exploration of Women’s Roles in Society*, that they produced based on *Macbeth*. The performance was viewed by an audience of Year 7 students with a particular interest in Drama, and the student audience was allowed to ask questions of the performers at the conclusion of the show. This program was both incredibly fun and incredibly beneficial, as it helped build up students’ confidence, creativity and collaborative skills; teach them valuable performance techniques straight from the mouths of professional actors; gain a stronger, more personal understanding of an actor’s life; consider the images and roles of women in modern society; and develop a deeper insight into and appreciation of Shakespeare and his work.
Debating at BGHS

The Years 7 and 8 debating teams have been successful this term in the Premier’s Debating Challenge competition. Both teams won their debates in the first round. Year 7 has been quite successful and will be continuing into the second round. Year 7 also made it to the semi-finals of the Sydney Western Debating Competition, which is a wonderful result.

The Years 9 and 10 debating teams have achieved some great results in the Premier’s Debating Challenge as well this term. Both teams won their debates in the first round. Year 9 defeated Chifley College and Year 10 won against Doonside High School. The girls have worked hard all term and their effort has really paid off. Our girls impressed the adjudicator so much that he went out of his way to complement them, noting that their debating skills are far superior to some of the senior-level teams that he has evaluated. The finals of round one were on Monday June 22nd between the Year 9 and Year 10 BGHS teams. Year 9 were successful in winning this final and they will now move on to round 2 of the competition.
Aboriginal Student Projects: Term 2

Blacktown Arts Centre: Riverstones and Ramifications

Year 11 students Bianca Holloway and Damita Saunders took part in a project with Aboriginal artist Adam Hill titled, “Take a Walk with Me.” Two of their stunning prints have already been sold, so make sure you take the time to visit the Blacktown Arts Centre and help celebrate our emerging artists.

Their work is part of the “Riverstones and Ramifications” exhibition showing until the 18th of July. The exhibition is an exploration of Aboriginal artist Bronwyn Bancroft’s life in both the bush and the city.

Aboriginal Drama Workshop

Blacktown Girls performed at the “Cultural Voices” showcase at Bankstown Arts Centre. Ane Fauui, Kellie Thompson, Tahla Nixon, Breanna Smith, Bianca Barton and Kiara Gordon confidently performed their own stories in front of a live audience.
*Mura Mittigar Visit*

As part of the Aboriginal girls’ project on Cultural Identity, the girls spent the day immersed in the culture of the Darag people. They took part in painting, boomerang throwing, and learning about bush tucker. Les Daniels also taught the girls about the importance of song.

*AIME (Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience)*

Kiara Gordon, Bianca Barton, Paige Tutton and Jessie-Rae McDonald spent a day at the University of Western Sydney, Parramatta Campus. They explored the campus with mentors, learning about university life and discussing pathways to achieve their goals.
**Yarn Circle**

Trish Bell has been proudly sharing her culture with the Aboriginal girls and their friends every Thursday during lunch time. The group is busily working on a banner to celebrate NAIDOC Week. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture yarn circles are dialogue circles in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people build strong relationships, learn from each other about culture and preserve and pass on cultural understandings.
KIWI SMOOTHIE
(2 servings)

Place in a blender:
1 banana
1-2 kiwifruit
1 pear
1 orange

Blend and enjoy!
You might like to add some water to make the smoothie more liquid.

BLEND & WIN!

Upload a photo of you making this smoothie on Instagram for a chance to win a $50 grocery voucher! When posting your photo, simply:

Include the hashtag:
#SALSAcookingcomp15

Follow @studentsaslifestyleactivists

Terms & Conditions at:
tinyurl.com/studentsaslifestyleactivists

Fighting Winter Sniffles the SALSA Way

Winter is now here! With the drop in temperature and humidity, along come the sniffles. There are a number of things we can do to reduce the chances of getting sick.

Exercise in the fresh outdoor air and eating more fresh fruit and vegetables containing vitamin C is a fantastic way to fight off winter bugs.

Physical activities you can enjoy include cycling, walking, swimming or a game of soccer.

DID YOU KNOW?

Kiwifruit are amazingly good for you and are also packed with fibre and a lot of vitamin C. They were originally called Chinese gooseberries and came from China.

Have you visited eatforhealth.gov.au?

It is jam packed with healthy lifestyle info and tips including how to eat healthy on a budget, ideas for the school lunch box and lots of healthy recipes. Check it out: