

the Spirit



Issue 27 | 2024

Introducing Our 2025 College Captains (p8)
Walking in the Footsteps of St Catherine (p10)
Honouring Sr Frances Caine OP OAM (p16)

Do More • Be More

A CATHOLIC COLLEGE FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN THE DOMINICAN TRADITION, YEARS 7 TO 12

Mission

Siena College, a Catholic secondary school in the Dominican Tradition, engages young women in a challenging education that empowers them with the personal resources to make a difference in the world, by searching for truth through a culture of lifelong learning.

Vision

As a vibrant, faith filled Catholic community with a commitment to justice, truth, reconciliation and compassion, we honour the sacred dignity of each person.

We aspire to provide exemplary and innovative education that will challenge young women to achieve their personal best and to embrace the future with hope, courage and confidence.

In the spirit of St Catherine of Siena, by word and action, we encourage young women to identify their strengths, enhance their sense of self worth and be open to new ideas.

Values

We live the Dominican values through:

Prayer by nurturing spirituality and celebrating joyfully as a community of Faith

Study by striving for personal excellence, thinking critically and seeking truth through research, creativity and innovation

Service by empowering young women to embrace diversity, respect human dignity and actively engage in the gospel imperative of responding to local and global injustice

Community by recognising that a sense of belonging and connectedness is the foundation for fostering good relationships and service to others

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Scan the QR code
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in Action towards 2030.



SIENA
COLLEGE
CAMBERWELL

A CATHOLIC COLLEGE FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN
THE DOMINICAN TRADITION, YEARS 7 TO 12

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We Acknowledge Country

Siena College acknowledges that our school community stands and meets on the sacred lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations.

While there has been great change to this land over the many generations, we know in our hearts and minds that their stories and spirits will always be written in this landscape.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we honour and respect the custodians past, present and emerging and we are grateful for the opportunity to join with them in continuing to nurture this land, water and community.

From the Principal

This final edition of *The Spirit* marks the end of the school year, a time often characterised by reflection, gratitude, hope and anticipation for the blessings of Christmas and the summer break.

This year is no exception. The recent distribution of the 2024 College Yearbook celebrates the diverse activities and achievements of our students across a broad range of endeavours. As I read through the publication, I was once again struck by the vibrancy and rich tapestry of what it means to be a Siena student.

A Siena education, rooted in our Dominican Tradition, invites students on a journey of discovery – about themselves, their relationships, their world, their neighbours and their God. This year, that journey encompassed the typical highs and lows of an academic year, made unique for each student through encounters with new subjects, teachers, friends, activities and student leaders. Such is the nature of growth and formation.



Celebrating the Feast of St Catherine

If one were to ask what lies at the heart of a Dominican education, we could turn to the words of St Catherine of Siena, prominently displayed in the College undercroft. These words, drawn from her dialogue with God, inspire and challenge us to live as she did:

I gave you eyes to look at the sky and everything else, and the beauty of creation because of Me.

I gave you ears to listen to my Word and pay attention to the needs of all the human family, and especially to your neighbours.

I gave you your tongue to proclaim my Word, to speak truth, to be the voice of the silenced, to turn away from self-absorption for the salvation of others and their dignity.

I gave you your hands to serve our human family so whenever you see one downtrodden or sick, you will reach out to them in their need.

I gave you your feet to carry you to places that are holy and useful to your neighbours for the glory and praise of my name.

The stories in the Yearbook and *The Spirit* offer a glimpse into the vibrant life of Siena College, capturing its spirit and mission. I extend my gratitude to the staff responsible for producing these outstanding publications, particularly Christine Lai and Amy Stubbs, for their collaboration and dedication to portraying the fullness of student life.

As the year concludes, I also wish to acknowledge the staff members who will be leaving Siena College at the end of 2024.

In their various roles, they have each served our community with distinction. We extend our heartfelt thanks and warmest wishes for their future happiness and success.

In particular, I recognise the following staff members who will retire in 2025 after years of exemplary service to Siena College:

- **Michael Petrie:** completing eight years at Siena College and an extraordinary forty-four years in Catholic education
- **Christine Miller:** completing twenty-five years of dedicated service to Siena College
- **Wen-Liang Tao:** completing thirty remarkable years of teaching at Siena College



Elizabeth Hanney
Principal

We are deeply grateful for their contributions and commitment and wish them every blessing in the years ahead.



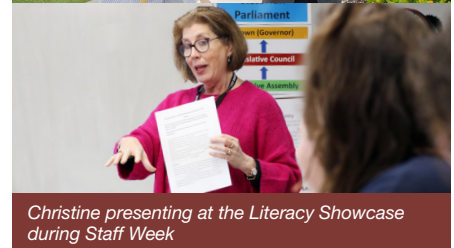
Farewell, 2024 Year 12 student leaders



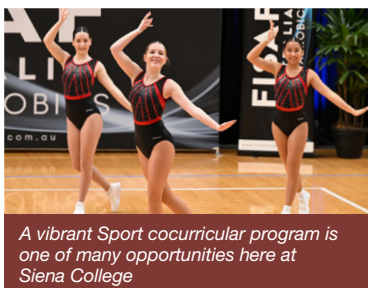
Alison Narburup (Year 10) and Debbie-Rose Narburup (Year 12) welcomed their family to Melbourne during the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School Gala Dinner



Wen-Liang leading the annual student dragon parade



Christine presenting at the Literacy Showcase during Staff Week



A vibrant Sport cocurricular program is one of many opportunities here at Siena College



2025 Year 12 Headstart program



Michael (second from the left) with other staff members during Footy Colours Day

From the College Board Chair

"This message of Christmas, therefore, belongs to, and is Good News for, everyone. This season is God-centred and it is a time of joy and many blessings."
K Rossman



As I reflect on 2024, I am filled with deep gratitude. My thanks go to our students for embracing their Siena education with spirit and joy, to our staff for their unwavering commitment and dedication, to parents for entrusting Siena College with the education of their daughters, and to our parent and alumnae volunteers for their steadfast support. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to our Board Committee Members and Directors for their generous sharing of time and expertise, as well as to Elizabeth Hanney (Principal), Antonella Rosati (Acting Principal, Term 3) and all members of the College Executive and Leadership Teams for their extraordinary commitment to delivering an exceptional education in the Dominican Tradition.

The engagement of students in academic, wellbeing and cocurricular pursuits, as well as in social justice initiatives, is truly something to celebrate. It has been my privilege to join Siena students and staff for several special celebrations this year, where the energy, connectedness and spirit of our community were tangibly felt.

While I look back with gratitude, I also look forward with hope for the promise of 2025. As the rich and fulfilling 2024 chapter of Siena College comes to a close, I am confident there is much to look forward to in the year ahead. It is a great privilege to work with and on behalf of young people. For those of us supporting Siena College in governance roles, we can be profoundly confident in the future. Our current students and alumnae are poised to be heard and seen as leaders beyond secondary school, bringing inclusivity, skill and openness to new possibilities.

I wish each member of the Siena community a peaceful and joyous Christmas. My prayer for each of you is that God will bless you and bless you most kindly.



Judith Potter
Siena College Board Chair



Siena alumnae at the Centenary Dinner (L-R): Sr Julianna Drobik OP, Sr Imelda Ryan OP (WA), and Sr Veronica Rosier OP

Dominican News

St Dominic's Parish Centenary Celebration

This year, St Dominic's Parish, Siena College's close neighbour, celebrated its Centenary with a series of memorable events. Festivities began on 17 March with a Mass commemorating the first ever Mass in the Priory. Over the weekend of 5-6 October, parishioners, Dominican Friars and Sisters, both past and present, came together for the 'Back to St Dominic's' weekend. Highlights included a dinner at Box Hill Golf Club on Saturday and a Centenary Mass with afternoon tea on Sunday. The celebrations concluded on 24 November with a closing Mass led by Archbishop Charles Balvo, Apostolic Nuncio to Australia, followed by a barbecue lunch.



Sr Julianna Drobik OP
DEA Trustee

Now Available! Siena Central App

College news, notifications, absences and your daughter's learning overview at your fingertips.

Download 'Siena Central' via the App Store or GooglePlay



A Year of Diverse Learning Experiences



Escape Room



Staff Baking Competition



The Servant of Two Masters: Siena cast



Sustainability Trail



Write a Book in a Term



Jessica Pulvirenti
(Class of 2014)



STEAM Careers Breakfast



Year 9 Drama in Education students performing at Hartwell Primary School

This year has been filled with rich and diverse experiential learning opportunities, enhancing the foundational classroom experience for our students.

Above is a glimpse of some highlights where students explored, expanded their knowledge, honed social skills and discovered more about themselves through varied learning environments.

Science Week

In 2024, Siena College celebrated National Science Week with the theme, *Species Survival: More Than Sustainability*. The week featured an array of exciting activities. Staff embraced their creativity in a themed baking competition, producing delicious and inventive treats. Students engaged in hands-on laboratory sessions, including balloon rockets, spaghetti bridges and an endangered species-themed escape room. A standout event was our inaugural Sustainability Trail, where local primary school students participated in an augmented reality (AR) scavenger hunt around campus, learning about endangered species and creating conservation-themed badges.

STEAM Careers Breakfast

At the annual STEAM Careers Breakfast, we welcomed a diverse group of scientists and engineers, including current parents and inspiring alumnae. This year's keynote speaker, Jessica Pulvirenti (Class of 2014), captivated attendees with her journey into conservation. Working with Zoos Victoria, Jessica has dedicated herself to breeding programs for the endangered Tasmanian Devil. After completing a Bachelor of Science and Honours research on Little Penguins at Phillip Island, Jessica is passionate about preserving Australia's threatened native species. It was inspiring to see one of our very own making a difference beyond our gates!

Year 9 Drama: *The Servant of Two Masters*

Siena College partnered once again with St Kevin's College to present Carlo Goldoni's *The Servant of Two Masters*. Over two evenings in September, a talented ensemble of Year 9 students transported audiences to the lively streets of 1960s Rome. The performances were filled with humour, chaos and charm, as students showcased their commitment and honed their improvisation and performance skills. Congratulations to all involved, and a special thanks to Mr Goran Banyai and Ms Lucy Waghorn from St Kevin's for their guidance and support in creating this enriching learning experience.

Write a Book in a Term (WABIAT)

As part of the 2024 Book Week celebrations, thirty students from Years 7 to 10 participated in the Write a Book in a Term (WABIAT) program. The process included three key stages:

- Initial Planning
- Creation
- Product Delivery

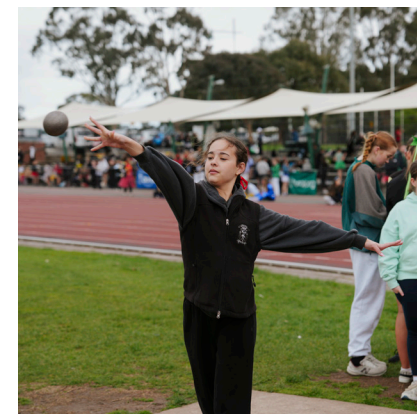
Students collaborated to produce two books for Italian learners and one for native Mandarin speakers. During Term 3, the creation phase culminated in a full-day writing workshop, with the Year 9 Drama in Education class transforming two books into performances. The final stage was the book presentations, where students watched their stories come to life on stage – a truly rewarding experience for all involved.



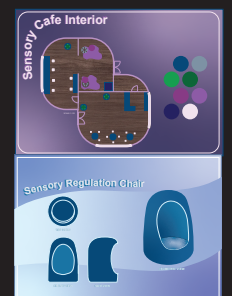
Donna Laughlin
Deputy Principal
Learning and Teaching



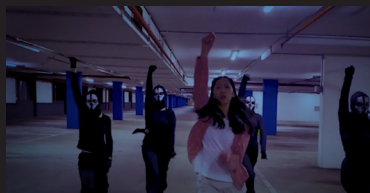
Congratulations to Waratah for winning the 2024 Inter House Athletics Carnival!



Congratulations to 2024 Art and Design Exhibition Award winners (clockwise from left): Principal's Choice Award winner, Grace Proctor (Product Design and Technology) and People's Choice Awards winners: Grace McPhee (Product Design and Technology), Stephanie Damianopoulos (Art Creative Practice), Fern Brunacci (Visual Communication Design) and Bella Fogg (Media)



Congratulations to the 2024 Antonio de Montesinos Award winner, Harriet Jackson (Year 7) and the Encouragement Award recipient, Priya Simons (Year 11). Well done to all other competitors: Tiasha De Silva (Year 7), Loshaya Jayasinghe (Year 8), Shehrbano Jafari (Year 8) and Ciara Whitehouse (Year 10) for showcasing their excellent public speaking skills!



Wellbeing in Action

In 2024, the College Theme came to life within the Wellbeing space, inspiring vibrant participation in House events like Fiesta, the Inter House Swim and Dive Carnival, the Inter House Athletics Carnival, and the Wellness Program.

Wellness Week, celebrated in Week 2 of Term 3, offered students a vibrant array of activities designed to promote joy, rejuvenation and wellbeing. The Wellbeing Team curated a rich program that included art and mindfulness sessions, a Buddies Lunch, friendship bracelet making sessions, therapy dog visits, and the ever-popular staff versus student dodgeball games. This initiative provided meaningful opportunities for students to strengthen connections, build friendships, and nurture self-care and growth mindsets.

Child Safety remains a cornerstone of all our work with students. Sophie Pryn (Cassia), Becky Scott (Dianella), Laine Rice (Kurrajong) and Lauren Seymour (Waratah) worked tirelessly to support all students in their respective Houses, creating opportunities for connection through various events and activities. In their daily interactions, they exemplified the Dominican values and led by example. Our continued efforts to promote social and emotional skills, and positive gender norms among students have significantly enhanced overall wellbeing. As updates to the Respectful Relationships resources are released, we look forward to sharing this information with our Siena community.

Respectful Relationships guided the team's collaboration to address some of the key challenges young people face today. These insights were integrated into the Wellness Program and inspired our parent webinar in November, hosted by Headspace. This online session offered practical tips and guidance on how to support young people during challenging times. Headspace provides online and phone counselling services, delivering vital information and assistance to help adolescents navigate transitions and tough periods. We hope participants found the webinar insightful and beneficial.

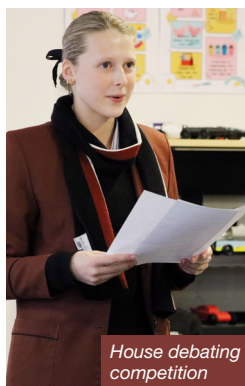
Headspace played a key role in Term 4, working with our Year 8 students to emphasise the importance of patience and empathy when supporting friends who may be struggling. Students were encouraged to remind their friends that they are always there to support them and to seek the guidance of a trusted adult when appropriate. These workshops highlighted that checking in with a friend, even in small ways, can make a big difference.

Farewell, Class of 2024

Term 4 is always a busy and memorable time, highlighted by our heartfelt farewell to the Class of 2024. Guided by the leadership of Amy Duffy and Melania Flunt, this courageous, joyful and hardworking cohort embodied enthusiasm, inspiration and exemplary leadership. We extend our deepest gratitude to them and wish them every success as they embark on the next exciting chapter of their lives.



Making friendship bracelets



House debating competition



Minna Jewell
Acting Deputy
Principal Wellbeing
2024



Natalie Kinsella
Acting Director
of Students
2024



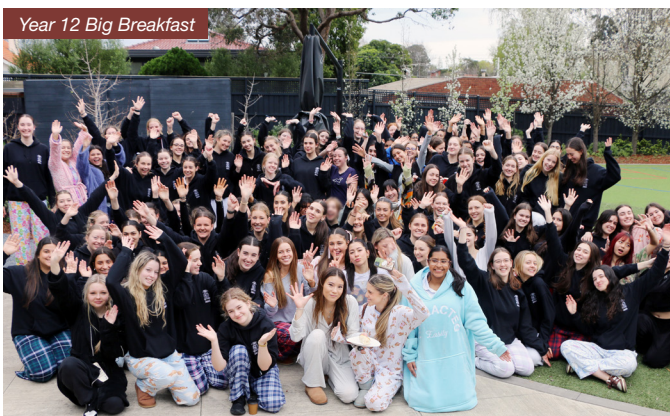
Quality time with Therapy Dog, Rooley



Staff versus student dodgeball game



Buddies lunch



Year 12 Big Breakfast

2025 Year 7 Orientation Day

On Friday, 22 November, Siena College welcomed the incoming Year 7 cohort for 2025. The Wellbeing Team provided a wide variety of getting-to-know-you activities to support these new students in their transition to high school. The program focused on fostering connections, building friendships and helping the students acclimate to their new environment. Additionally, the students explored the Siena campus with the guidance of staff and student leaders. In 2025, the Year 7s will meet their Year 12 Buddies – an exciting milestone for both year levels.



Celebrating St Dominic's Legacy and Living Out Our Mission



Our annual community celebration of St Dominic's Day brought us together to reflect on the vision St Dominic held over eight hundred years ago.

His vision shared the good news of the Gospel with the people of his time, and promoted knowledge and learning as essential to seeking and understanding truth. Reflecting on the origins of our charism and celebrating St Dominic's legacy is a powerful reminder of who we are as a community in 2024, and the role each of us plays in continuing the Dominican story as members of the wider Dominican family.

Semester 2 Fundraising Initiatives

This semester, we valued the opportunity to support the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project. Dianella and Cassia Houses collaborated with the Siena community to raise awareness about the essential services these organisations provide for those in need.

In Term 4, our focus shifted to St Mary's House of Welcome. Through these initiatives, we reflected on the challenges faced by many in our community due to gender-based violence, mental health issues and the plight of those seeking refuge in Australia. Supporting these causes allowed us to examine the 'truth' of our times and live out the values of Catholic Social Teaching in a practical, life-affirming way, fulfilling the mission of the contemporary Catholic Church.

Welcoming Tozi Makoba

In November, we were delighted to welcome Tozi Makoba from the Kopanang Community Project in Tsakane, South Africa. A former host mother to Siena students, Tozi reunited with past immersion participants, and shared with students and staff the challenges faced by her community and the empowerment gained through education and employment. We are reminded to appreciate our blessings and deepened our commitment to supporting the Kopanang Project.



Reuniting with past immersion participants



Cassia bake sale and silent auction



Dianella cup noodle sale and winter clothing donation drive



Gathering donations during House group time for St Mary's House of Welcome



Head of English, Kacey Pelle shaves her head to fundraise for the Kopanang Community Project



Observing a Year 10 Product Design and Innovation class

Ongoing Partnership with Friday Night School

Our partnership with Friday Night School (FNS) continues to be a key element of service at Siena College. Students from Years 9 to 12 participated in weekly tutoring sessions and in October, they attended the annual FNS Camp on the Mornington Peninsula followed by the end-of-year party. FNS participation has deeply impacted our students, fostering empathy, improving communication skills and enhancing their appreciation for the power of education.



Bronwyn Ilott
Director of Faith and Mission

Championing Conservation and Community

In Term 3, Siena College was proud to collaborate with WWF-Australia to host a fundraiser in celebration of World Environment Day.

For a donation, students wore their favourite scarves to school for the day. With the funds raised, Siena is delighted to announce the adoption of Leopold the snow leopard, with additional contributions supporting vital environmental conservation efforts.

Our 2025 Veritas Environment Leader, Asta R, reflected on the importance of the day, stating: *“World Environment Day this year is tackling land restoration, desertification and drought resilience, highlighting the fragile balance on which ecosystems both abroad and in Australia depend.”*

Their theme, ‘Our land. Our future. We are #GenerationRestoration’, encourages Siena students to explore their role in preserving natural habitats while supporting the dedicated researchers and conservationists protecting endangered species.”

The term also celebrated the outstanding efforts of Dianella House in their campaign to support Vinnies and its mission to combat homelessness and poverty. Siena’s Rug Up Day was a resounding success, with students participating wholeheartedly and with enthusiasm. It was truly inspiring to see our students collaborate with Vinnies representatives, reinforcing Siena’s commitment to the invaluable work Vinnies carries out in our communities.



Rug Up Day



Meet Leopold, the Snow Leopard



World Environment Day



Gerard Sutton
Head of Justice Education

“Rest at the End, Not in the Middle.”

This quote certainly reflects the path our 2024 student leaders took. Rest was not on the agenda this year as leaders in our four Houses dedicated themselves to generating awareness and funds to support their respective House organisations.

It has been a privilege to work with our 2024 student leaders. Their energy and commitment, reflecting the Pillars of Service and Community, led to the following donations:

Cassia: The Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project: **\$1,736.00**

Dianella: St Vincent de Paul Society: **\$1,856.99**

Kurrajong: Opening the Doors Foundation: **\$2,067.32**

Waratah: Caritas Australia: **\$1,743.47**

Students have demonstrated *Courage* when asked to step up, sharing their *Wisdom* with younger peers or those new to the Student Representative Council (SRC), and experiencing *Joy* in the commitment and purpose they found along the way.

As the year ends, we farewell the 2024 student leaders and welcome the 2025 leaders. On 25 October, students participated in Leadership Day, where they planned for Fiesta and discussed initiatives and fundraising for their House organisations. **The day’s value is best expressed by our students:**

“Leadership Day was a great opportunity to plan for the upcoming year. As a new SRC member, I was welcomed by returning members and enjoyed lunch with SRC students from different year levels. It was a valuable chance for collaboration.” Sarah (Year 12)

“The Student Leadership Day was a great way to get to know the new SRC members and spend valuable time planning for the action-packed year of SRC initiatives ahead! It was a wonderful opportunity for 2025 Fiesta planning.” Annabelle R (Year 9)



2024 Student Representative Council



2025 Student Leadership Day



Peta Mackintosh
Head of Student Formation

Introducing Our 2025 College Captains



Connecting with Cassia leaders across year levels at the 2025 Student Leadership Day

Tell us a little bit about your family and how you came to Siena.



Grace: Ever since primary school, I told my mum I wanted to be school captain, so being named one of Siena College's 2025 College Captains alongside Katrina, is an incredible honour. I come from a large Italian family where I am the only girl with two brothers. Growing up in such a lively and close-knit household has taught me the importance of support, respect and resilience. When it came time to choose a school, Siena College stood out because of its strong sense of community and shared values which align with my own.



Katrina: The strong sense of sisterhood and Siena community spirit inspired my decision to run for the role of College Captain. This same sense of belonging was a key reason my family and I chose Siena as my school back in 2019.

Can you describe your leadership style?



Katrina: My three older brothers have been significant role models throughout my life. Each embodies different leadership qualities, which have guided and influenced me, helping to shape my optimistic leadership style – one I believe is well-suited for this role.



Grace: Looking ahead to 2025, my approach to leadership will focus on inclusion and support. Having faced learning challenges myself, I understand that leadership is not about standing out or having all the answers. It is about fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to succeed. I want to offer encouragement and create opportunities for those facing difficulties, just as others have supported me, ensuring they have the chance to thrive.

What do you love most about Siena?



Katrina: What I love most about Siena is the incredible sense of community and the many opportunities it provides for students to get involved. Over the years, I have had the privilege of participating in a variety of school initiatives, each of which has strengthened my connection to the College and its values. This sense of belonging and support is something I cherish deeply.



Grace: One of the things I love most about Siena is its vibrant music program. Music has always been a central part of my life, and Siena has provided countless opportunities to grow as a musician – whether through performances, lessons, or being part of a creative and supportive community. It has been a wonderful space for me to explore my passion for the arts while connecting with others who share that same love for music.

What are you most looking forward to in your final year at Siena?



Grace: As I approach my final year at Siena, I am excited to make lasting memories with my peers and celebrate all we have achieved together. I am also looking to the future, with plans to pursue a career in primary education. I am passionate about teaching and hope to make a meaningful impact on young learners, particularly those who face challenges. I also aspire to study abroad to broaden my perspective on education and learn from different systems, helping me to create inclusive classrooms where all students can flourish.



Katrina: I look forward to working alongside Grace and the entire Siena community next year to encourage students across all year levels to strive for their personal best.

Grace performing at the 2023 Siena College and De La Salle College Concert



Katrina helping out at the 2024 St Catherine's Day fundraiser

What is one invaluable thing that Siena College has taught you?



Katrina: One invaluable thing Siena College has taught me is the importance of fostering a sense of belonging. Through its strong community spirit, I have learned that when individuals feel included, valued and respected, they are empowered to achieve their best. This lesson inspires me as I step into the role of College Captain for 2025 alongside Grace. Together, we are committed to creating an environment where every student experiences the same sense of connection and support that makes Siena so special.



Grace: Above all, my journey at Siena has taught me the value of resilience. Through academic challenges and personal growth, I have learned the power of perseverance and the strength of community. With the skills and confidence Siena has instilled in me, I am ready to embrace whatever lies ahead with determination and optimism.

A heartfelt thank you to our 2024 College Captains, Amy Duffy and Melania Flunt, for their outstanding leadership and dedication. To the Class of 2024, we wish you every success as you step into your bright and promising futures.



Amy and Melania in Year 7, 2019



Hosting the Lip Sync Battle during SRC Week



Addressing the Siena community for the last time



Farewell, Class of 2024



Year 12s presented a meaningful token of appreciation to thank the College



Congratulations to House of the Year, Dianella!



College staff surprised the Class of 2024 with a farewell flash mob



Walking in the Footsteps of St Catherine

The 2024 Siena in Siena pilot trip in November was an incredible journey for twenty Year 9 students and accompanying staff.

Beginning in Rome, they explored iconic landmarks such as the Trevi Fountain, Vatican Museum, Sistine Chapel, Colosseum and Roman Forum. A highlight was meeting Australian Ambassador to the Holy See, Ms Chiara Porro and visiting Santa Sabina.

Next, they travelled to the picturesque Chianti village where the local community gave them a warm welcome. Students visited the Tavarnelle Museum, a nearby

monastery and enjoyed authentic Italian pizza in Barberino. In Siena, they walked in the footsteps of St Catherine, connecting with the city's rich history and learning about the origins of our Rust coloured blazers.

A memorable experience was a cooking class at a Michelin star restaurant in Tavarnelle. Students prepared tortellini, ravioli and cannelloni, and enjoyed the fruits of their labour. They also collaborated with local students, exploring Tavarnelle's history, playing sports and painting terracotta pots for the monastery cloisters as part of a community project.

The group also visited Florence, Pisa, Assisi and Sambuca, with highlights including Florence's Duomo, the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi and the breathtaking views from Rocca Maggiore. In Assisi, they learned about St Francis' humility and love of nature, inspiring reflections on his legacy.

The trip concluded with a final Mass and the completion of the terracotta pot project, symbolising the enduring connection between Siena College and Tavarnelle. This extraordinary cultural, historical and spiritual journey will remain a cherished memory for the students, broadening their horizons and deepening their understanding of Siena's heritage.



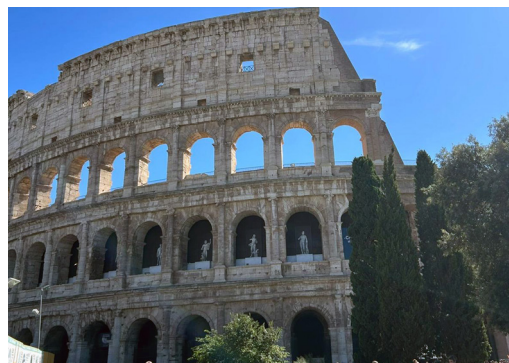
Indulging in local Italian cuisine with a delightful dinner at Piazza Navona



Connecting with the Tavarnelle community in Chianti village



Painting terracotta pots to symbolise the bond between Siena College and the Tavarnelle community



Visiting iconic landmarks such as the Colosseum



A Michelin-star cooking class where students learned to craft tortellini, penne, ravioli and cannelloni



Visiting Florence



Exploring the underground passages in the Catacombs

Spotlight on Siena Staff

Spotlight on Siena Staff is an ongoing series capturing reflections, motivations and advice from some of our amazing Siena College staff – a testament to their unwavering dedication and unique contributions that shape and enrich our community.



Kathryn Anderson
Art and Product
Design Teacher

Three years at
Siena College

How did you get involved in working as an educator? How did it all begin?

"Growing up, my country school offered only one VCE arts subject, so I completed three by studying at another school. After graduation, I knew I wanted a career in the arts in Melbourne. Before earning my Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) and Arts degree at Deakin University, I completed a Diploma of the Arts (Small Companies and Community Theatre) at Swinburne University of Technology. This opened doors to diverse arts opportunities including festivals, touring shows, venue management and team leadership. After starting a family, I transitioned into education, completing a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and contributing to the establishment of a traineeship program at Arts Centre Melbourne."

What advice would you give to current students?

"I share the advice I received in secondary school: 'If you do not have a clear vision for your life, do not worry. Do not be afraid to try new things and pursue what you enjoy, building skills and knowledge through experiences that inspire you. This can help you discover a career you love – or even two, as I did!'"



Stephanie Leslie
Acting Head of
Humanities

Three years at
Siena College

How did you get involved in working as an educator? How did it all begin?

"I have always been passionate about music and the idea of passing on that love to others excited me. So, I began teaching the flute when I was nineteen. Initially, I only taught students privately, but soon I branched out and taught in various schools. I loved being back in the fast paced school environment where every day felt different because every student is unique! However, what really solidified my desire to become an educator was a period of volunteer teaching in Cambodia. I adored this experience as I developed both personally and professionally. When I returned home, I commenced my studies in education."

What motivates you in your line of work?

"I was fortunate enough to complete my secondary education at a single sex school where I had a wonderful experience. Having since taught in both coeducational and all girls schools, I am very passionate about providing a safe, encouraging space for young women to uncover their own passions, and to grow and learn about themselves during such a crucial time of development."



Kacey Pelle
Head of English

One year at
Siena College

Where did you study and have you completed any further study since your Bachelors degree?

"I hold a Bachelor of Arts (Applied Linguistics) from the Australian National University, a Master of Arts (Children's Literature) from Macquarie University and a Master of Teaching from the University of New South Wales. I have been fortunate to have multiple opportunities for further educational research and study, most recently working as a Teacher-Researcher with the The University of Melbourne Graduate School of Education on a Stella Prize-funded project exploring the role of Australian women's writing in the contemporary English curriculum – a precursor to a PhD."

What do you think is Siena College's unique selling point?

"I think this is best summed up by a lovely conversation I had at the Swimming Carnival with a Siena parent I also knew from my previous school. She asked how I was settling in, and the way she described Siena was just beautiful – she said the community at Siena 'really wraps around you'. Approaching the end of my first year here, I can say that is absolutely true. It is a tremendous privilege."

A Day on the Green for Equity Scholarships

The 2024 Siena Golf Day held on Friday, 8 November was an incredible day of camaraderie and competition, with eighty-five players taking to the immaculate greens of Kew Golf Club.

This much-loved event continues to be a vital fundraiser for the Siena Equity Scholarship Fund. Thank you to our Major Sponsor, Berwick Volkswagen, our eleven Gold Sponsors and two in-kind sponsors, whose generous contributions made the day possible.

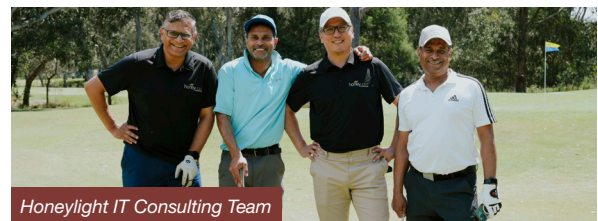
Twenty-two teams comprising of suppliers, parents, staff, students and friends of Siena came together for the event. Congratulations to our top three teams:

First place: Honeylight IT Consulting

Second place: Vierokies

Third place: Fontic Group

A special shout-out to our XPro, Henk Van Riessen for hosting the exciting 'Beat or Bribe the XPro' competition, adding an extra layer of fun to the day.



Community Awards

We congratulate the following community members who were acknowledged at our Night of Excellence on Tuesday, 10 December 2024.

The Community Award recognises individuals or families who contributed significantly to Siena College. The Dr Ursula McKenna Award recognises excellence in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The Notable Alumna Award recognises a Siena alumna who has made an important contribution in their chosen field, or to the community on a local/global scale.



Community Award Recipient: Helena Chinnock

Dr Ursula McKenna Award Recipient:
Prof Dorota Gertig (Class 1980)



Notable Alumna 2024: Dr Wendy Timms PhD
(Class of 1981)

Night of Excellence



Visit our College website to learn more: siena.vic.edu.au/news/2024-night-of-excellence



Spotlight on Siena Alumnae

Spotlight on Siena Alumnae celebrates the achievements of our alumnae throughout the year, showcasing their remarkable accomplishments and varied career paths. Some of those featured also generously dedicate their time to engage with current students and their parents during our annual Careers Showcase.



Majella Hine (Class of 2023)
 Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (IELLEN) Student Recognition Award Recipient
 Majella was honoured with the 2024 IELLEN Award which celebrates youths (aged twelve to nineteen) connected to the areas of Stonnington, Port Phillip and Boroondara. Nominees are recognised for their remarkable resilience, notable achievements against the odds, or positive contributions to the community, peer groups or programs. Majella also served as one of our College Captains in 2023.

Emelia Jackson (Class of 2007)
 Runner Up, Dessert Masters (Season 2)
 Emelia narrowly missed out on being crowned Dessert Master in the Season 2 finale but proudly walks away as the incredible Runner Up! Emelia finished third in MasterChef Australia 2014, then returned to win MasterChef Australia: Back to Win in 2020. Earlier this year, Emelia released a new cookbook called *Some of My Best Friends Are Cookies*, which follows her successful 2022 cookbook, *First, Cream the Butter and Sugar*.


Kate McDonald (Class of 2018)
 Tenth place, Artistic Gymnastics 2024 Olympic Games
 Kate (pictured first from the left) showed why she is so highly regarded on Uneven Bars with an impressive routine at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. She let out a mighty roar upon sticking the landing which drew big celebrations from her teammates. Kate's philosophy is to find joy in gymnastics, performing best when having fun. We are incredibly proud of Kate for inspiring others with her perseverance and passion.




Bridie Kibby (Class of 2001)
 Global Network Product Owner, Specsavers
"With up to seventy-five percent of your waking hours spent at work, choose a workplace that aligns with your values and offers genuine opportunities for growth."



Isabelle Laming (Class of 2011)
 Public and Government Affairs, ExxonMobil Australia
"Seek mentors early in your career, and allow room for growth by saying yes to opportunities outside of your comfort zone."



Julie McCartin (Class of 1993)
 Law Graduate, Corrs Chambers Westgarth
"Make the most of every opportunity that is open to you, and back yourself – you've got this!"



Steph Cranstoun (Class of 2010)
 Psychologist and Senior Forensic Clinician, Corrections Victoria
"Don't sweat the small stuff. No matter how you perform in school, there are always opportunities to find the work that you love."



Hayley Collins (Class of 2010)
 Senior Clinical Dietician, Northern Health
"Don't rush! Take the opportunity to explore the world, get to know yourself and invest in meaningful friendships along the way."



Mia Flynn (Class of 2018)
 Research Assistant for Infectious Diseases, Burnet Institute Melbourne
"Buy coffee for someone whose career or life interests you; learning from their experiences can help you more than any university unit."



Adrienne Ringin (Class of 2009)
 PhD Candidate and Legal Teaching Fellow, La Trobe University
"Follow your passion. This may change several times so be open, experience new things and don't be afraid to talk to everyone."



Breana Ritchie (Class of 2018)
 Marketing Assistant, CSL Seqirus
"Things happens for a reason and the saying, 'you can't be upset about something that was never meant for you' has gotten me through moments of disappointment."



Anna Vassiliadis (Class of 2012)
 Architectural Graduate, M3 Group
"Embrace a challenge as an opportunity to learn, and importantly, don't be afraid to ask questions or make mistakes."

2024 Notable Alumna



Dr Wendy Timms PhD (Class of 1981) presenting her keynote speech at the 2024 Night of Excellence

When Wendy left Siena, she carried with her an inner confidence rooted in true friendships, individuality and community values. This led her to launch WT Domestic Cleaning, which achieved success when she turned twenty.

After selling the business to fund travels across East Africa, India and Southeast Asia, Wendy resumed cleaning operations to support her university studies. Her Siena education laid the foundation for academic success, leading to a PhD and nearly a decade in higher education, teaching and developing programs. In the 1990s, Wendy faced gender bias in her professional roles, often mistaken for a secretary despite her academic leadership.

After achieving her goals in academia, she joined the Victorian Public Sector in 2000, where Siena's social justice values aligned with her work. By 2003, she became an Executive in the Department of Education, navigating challenges, including unsolicited and often contradictory advice to "speak up more" or "talk less". Wendy worked with five Ministers over twenty years, embracing the challenge of "speaking truth to power", with a confidence rooted in her authenticity, nurtured at Siena and strengthened by experience.

Wendy encourages Siena students to step forward with confidence, trust their inner voice, and live authentically as they embark on their next chapter.



Class of 2004



Class of 2014

Alumnae Reunions



Class of 1984



Alumnae from the 1940s, 50s and 60s



Class of 1994



Class of 2014



Class of 2004



Class of 1956



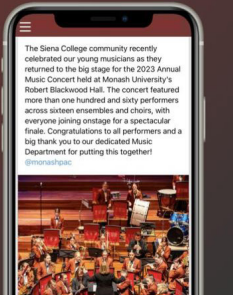
Class of 1994 alumnae with Sr Margaret Mary Brown OP, former Principal (1992-1994)



Class of 1974

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Download the Siena Alumnae App

Now you can effortlessly catch up on Alumnae news, dive into Facebook posts, stay updated on College events and explore handy links.

Head to the App Store, and search for 'Siena Alumnae'. Let's stay connected like never before: siena-alumnae.app.link

Alumnae Wall Inscriptions

The Siena College Alumnae Wall is an historic tribute to our Dominican Sisters, Prioresses, Board Chairs, Principals and of course our alumnae! Every student who attended Siena College is invited to have their name inscribed on the Alumnae Wall. Names are listed in decades from 1940 to 2024 on panels throughout the picturesque Convent Cloisters.

Inscriptions are \$50 per student and further details are available via this link: siena.vic.edu.au/college-community/alumnae/alumnae-wall

This is an ongoing initiative with all new inscriptions registered by mid December added to the Alumnae Wall each January.



Births

1. **Meg O'Brien** (Vice Captain, Class of 2002) and her husband, Daniel, welcomed Hugo Stephen Baker on 22 June 2024. Hugo is a beloved addition to the family, joining his proud older siblings, Harriet and Edward.
2. **Gemma Nash, née Pavone** (Class of 2009), and her husband joyfully welcomed their third child, Catherine Helen Nash, on 6 September 2024.
3. Staff member, **Jess Sullivan** and her husband, Mat, celebrated the arrival of Lucas Francis Sullivan on 19 August 2024.
4. Staff member, **Maria Gonsalvez** and her husband, Greg, welcomed their daughter, Naomi on 24 September 2024, much to the delight of big sister Vera, who is already doting on her baby sister.



We Remember

May They Rest in Peace.

Elizabeth Anne Moloney, née Kelleher (Class of 1959) passed away on 12 September 2024. She is lovingly remembered by her sister, Judith Gallagher, née Kelleher (Class of 1960). Elizabeth shared a remarkable fifty-one years of marriage with her husband, Pete, and together they were blessed with two sons and five grandsons.

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of former College staff member, **Deirdre Moore** on 25 October 2024. A devoted mother of four, Deirdre was a cherished member of our community, serving the College for nearly three decades. Her dedication to supporting staff with audiovisual resources, Drama and Music productions, and school events was unparalleled. As the school photographer and contributor to the annual College magazine, Deirdre's efforts enriched many aspects of life at Siena. Deirdre will be fondly remembered for her kindness, generosity and lasting contributions to our community.



Honouring Sr Frances Caine OP OAM



Sr Frances Caine OP OAM
(Class of 1944)



Sr Margaret Smith and
Sr Frances Caine during
the 1940s



L-R: Lois Gibson (Class of 1944), Sr Frances Caine
and Gwen Meagher (Class of 1948) celebrating the
College's 75th Anniversary

Sr Frances Caine OP OAM (Class of 1944), the oldest living Siena alumna passed away on 1 August 2024.

Sr Frances joined Siena College in its second year, transferring from St Dominic's Primary School to begin Year 8. At the time, the College had only thirty-two students, and Sr Frances quickly became known for her love of learning and her unwavering commitment to school, rarely missing a day. After graduating from Siena College, Sr Frances entered the Dominican Order in Maitland, New South Wales.

From 1948 to 1989, she dedicated her life to teaching hearing impaired children. In retirement, she extended her service by living with Aboriginal communities on

Bathurst Island in the Northern Territory and assisting with Ear Health and Education Programs.

In 2002, Sr Frances was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her service to children with impaired hearing, particularly through the Aboriginal Hearing Health Program in the Northern Territory.

Sr Frances has been a vital link between past students and the College, and her shared memories have been invaluable. A friend to many staff, and a remarkable woman. Sr Frances will be missed.

*Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord
And may perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace. Amen*



Marian Jenkinson
College Archivist

Father's Day Breakfast





Music Residency



Annual Music Concert



Year 7 Rising Stars



International Women's Day Concert



Cabaret Night



Night of Jazz



Lunchtime Soirée



Autumn Concert



VISIT US!

Register for an
Open Morning
in 2025



SIENA
COLLEGE
CAMBERWELL

A CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN
THE DOMINICAN TRADITION, YEARS 7 TO 12

TERM 1 2025

Monday, 10 February
Thursday, 20 March

TERM 2 2025

Friday, 2 May
Monday, 2 June

2026 GENERAL EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications are now open!
Testing Day will be held on
Saturday, 22 February 2025.

www.siena.vic.edu.au