

Year 9 students reflect on a year of service

St Andrew's Working Bee – The following section was written by Olivia Lee and Hannah Lui

Our group of Year 9 girls went to St Andrew's Anglican Church in Strathfield to help with various tasks such as cleaning up, gardening, and organising, as well as doing a few other activities back at School.

On our first visit to the church, we helped clean by wiping down surfaces and clearing out cobwebs from the corners of the rooms. A couple of people also worked in the garden, doing some weeding and pulling out dead plants. After this, we headed back to School to make thank-you cards for the church community.

One activity that was particularly enjoyable was redoing the flowerbeds. After weeding them on our first visit, we noticed many of the plants were dead and the soil was dry. So, the next time we visited, we brought along bags of soil and tools, as well as lavender and rosemary plants to put in the flowerbeds. We chose these plants because they are hardy, meaning they have a good chance of surviving. Many of us worked on the flower beds, helping to replace the soil, mixing it into the original soil and planting the flowers. We were very satisfied with the finished product; the flowers elevated the church's appearance and brought a burst of life and colour.



Laura Baquero Arcila and Gloria Milosis

In our third session helping, we split into small groups again to do odd jobs, including sweeping leaves off the street, weeding, cleaning surfaces and organising cupboards.

As some of the girls were sweeping up leaves outside the church, a member of the local community commented on how great it was to see them helping to serve the community and said that our help was much appreciated. It was rewarding to see how we could do good for the community through our cleaning and work at the church. We hoped to serve the people who attend the church and help make the church a welcoming and safe place for all people in the community.

The Rev. Bill Crews Foundation – Angelina Joannou and Gabriella Protopsaltis

During the pandemic, 1.1 million free meals were given to the needy and homeless by the Rev. Bill Crews Foundation. The Rev. Bill Crews Foundation supplies essential food hampers to thousands of homeless and disadvantaged people each year.



Year 9 girls volunteering for the Rev. Bill Crews Foundation

During our time at the Rev. Bill Crews Foundation, we learnt new skills and gained a deeper appreciation of the value of serving our community.

As we arrived at the building for the first time, we saw many people at the facility using the library, internet and resting. Over three visits, we packed hundreds of hampers to be sent out to people in need across Sydney. Items inside these hampers included pasta, flour, canned food, and long-life milk.

In addition, Year 9 students held a food drive to collect food to donate to the Rev. Bill Crews Foundation. We also held two bake sales where we raised money to purchase more food items for the hampers. The volunteers at the Foundation were very friendly and hardworking and told us they appreciated our time and effort. They also told us stories about

the people who receive these hampers so we could better understand the positive impact the hampers have. It was so much fun and we loved having the opportunity to serve people in our community.

Thread Together – Alyssa Stamson

I was part of the Thread Together group, an organisation that repurposes unsold clothing which would otherwise be disposed of. To support the program, we travelled to a warehouse in Banksmeadow and took part in the process of repurposing by sorting, folding and categorising unsold clothes to be prepared for distribution to those in need.

We also participated in service at Meriden and were divided into groups to assist the School in maintenance, organisation and cleaning. My group assisted the Library by preparing Meriden books to be sent to charity groups such as the Salvation Army. One of the aspects I enjoyed most was the teamwork my group demonstrated over the course of the program. We were working alongside students we had not collaborated with before, meaning I formed closer relationships with some of my peers while learning and participating in the activities.

Community service is crucial to better understand the situations of others and to help support underprivileged groups. It also encourages compassion and a greater awareness of the opportunities we have been offered and allows us to share our resources with others.

This experience has encouraged me to pursue further service opportunities to gain a better understanding of important issues in our community. It has also motivated me to think about the ways in which we can actively minimise these problems to give everyone the same opportunities.



Aleisha Mashuk and Charlotte Butler