

Students represent Meriden on Youth Advisory Board

Earlier this month, Nidhi Nellore and Phoebe van Niekerk attended a board meeting at New South Wales Parliament House. The girls are currently serving as Meriden's delegates to the Strathfield Youth Advisory Board, established by the local member for Strathfield, Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li MP, to gain insight into the challenges affecting young people.

Representing Meriden as members of this student body is providing the girls with a wonderful opportunity to participate in community learning and enhance the Lateral Learning skills and capabilities of communication, critical thinking, collaboration and global citizenship.

Phoebe and Nidhi share their experiences of the day below. They will be attending another board meeting next year.



Nidhi Nellore and Phoebe van Niekerk

Ms Priscilla Curran

Dean of Lateral Learning

The following section was written by Phoebe van Niekerk, Year 11

Visiting New South Wales Parliament House with Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li's Youth Advisory Board was an extremely rewarding experience. It was a great networking opportunity for senior students in the Strathfield electorate and gave us the chance to discuss a range of topical issues that affect young people and our wider communities.

During the visit, we broke into smaller groups to prepare a Notice of Motion within the Legislative Assembly, simulating how MPs can call the Government to act. In doing so, we learnt in greater depth how our bicameral New South Wales Parliament functions and how legislation is passed. Through a Question on Notice, we saw how the bicameral system creates a "check and balance" of the judiciary by asking questions such as, "What strategies will the government implement to limit discrepancies between public and private schools?"

The following section was written by Nidhi Nellore, Year 10

The opportunity to represent youth issues and concerns at New South Wales Parliament House was a humbling and gratifying experience. We were given a tour of the building, exploring the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Council and the Jubilee Room. We learnt about the important influence politicians have on the functioning of our society. After the tour, we learnt about Notices of Motions, a method of introducing a bill. The topic my group focused on was the inflation rate and the impact this has on rising homelessness.

We further learnt that Questions on Notice are used to raise queries that specifically target an issue. An example we proposed was, "What is the difference in average life expectancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians?" We proposed this question in order to address the inequity of healthcare and intergenerational trauma that Indigenous Australians face.

At the end of the meeting, we were given the opportunity to deliver the Notice of Motion to the legislative assembly. Overall, the visit to New South Wales Parliament House gave us new insights into the different occupations available in government and the role individuals have within the operation of our democratic society.