



open access
COLLEGE

STUDENT ACHIEVERS

of Open Access College

Inspirational role models & their stories

March 2019

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The students' stories contained here are a microcosm of all Open Access College students, and by celebrating this small selection of students we are acknowledging and celebrating the achievements of all students at Open Access College.

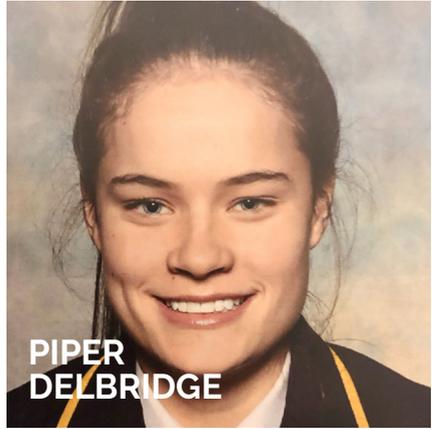
As you read the stories in this book you will be struck by the amazing achievements of each of these individuals. The one constant is that each of these students set themselves goals. The goals these students chose were individual, challenging, achievable, personally meaningful and future focused.

It was not an easy road to travel to achieve their goals, but because they were focused and determined they took every step and fall along the way as a learning experience, making them better learners, problem solvers and creative thinkers.

Many Open Access students often come from complex circumstances. Students may be isolated. They may be parents or carers – juggling work, family and study. They may have chronic illness. Or they may be travelling, with no fixed location.

All of our Student Achievers acknowledge that the flexible learning environment of Open Access College has enabled them to continue to study and achieve their goals.

We know that successes at Open Access College lay a solid foundation for future achievements, and we wish all students positive and rewarding futures.



Sophia Casanova Clarke



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is Sophia.

Over the past year, my family has spent time in Victoria and South Australia. Open Access College allowed me to continue my studies throughout this period. When I'm not babysitting my nephew, I enjoy caring for my pet rabbit, painting animals and landscapes, and reading novels.

My experience at OAC...

I studied Stage 2 Biology and Nutrition at Open Access College and achieved fantastic results in both subjects. The distance education setting enabled me to develop my independence in learning as it required greater initiative to be taken. The flexibility afforded by this system helped improve valuable organisational and time management skills, that will undoubtedly be of significance in my tertiary studies.

My advice to current and future students is to ensure that you allocate time each week to commit to studying the class material and completing any pre-class tasks and homework, so that you are able to participate fully and get the most out of your class.

The small class sizes allowed for more personalised learning than perhaps a traditional school, which led to me having a comprehensive understanding of all topics and finding that I was well prepared for my tests and, particularly, exams. My teachers were always very understanding and responded thoroughly to all questions. I would like to thank Krista Schuurmans (Biology) and Kelly Sharrad (Nutrition) for their guidance and support over my final year at school.

And today...

I am thrilled to have been offered a place in the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Tasmania, and will begin my studies there this year. My ultimate goal is to help improve health outcomes, particularly of underprivileged people. I am eager to actively extend the reach of health services, including to more isolated communities that have limited resources and service access.

Piper Delbridge



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is Piper.

I am 18 years old, the youngest of 4 siblings and live in Adelaide with my parents, brother and my 2 year old beagiler Ellie. I like all sports but especially netball, I love the ocean and relaxing with friends in my down time.

My experience at OAC...

I began studying at Open Access College in 2018 at the beginning of my year 12, completing Stage 2 Health through the college.

My school didn't have enough students to run Health that year; so I investigated OAC. I had never heard of OAC beforehand and was quite nervous about attending classes over the internet however I am now so thankful that I had the opportunity.

I found it a challenge to attend my lesson at the same time each week due to many other school commitments clashing, however my OAC teacher was so understanding and flexible, always making sure that if I was unable to attend that he would phone me to catch me up on what I had missed.

I really benefited from the experience, I it significantly improved my communication skills as I had to engage with complete strangers in an unfamiliar environment. It didn't take long to adapt because everyone was so friendly and encouraging.

I could not be more appreciative of the ongoing support my teacher Daniel gave me, if it wasn't for his knowledge and supportive nature I would never have achieved the results I did.

And today...

I successfully completed my SACE, achieving an ATAR of 95.80 and receiving a merit in Health and a A+ in textile studies. I will be attending Adelaide University in the second semester to study a Bachelor of Health and Medical Science and then hopefully transfer into post graduate Medicine. Once I have completed my university I hope to go on and be a Paediatric Urologist.

Joanna Hanley



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is Joanna.

I live at home in the Adelaide Hills, located about 2 minutes away from the beautiful Belair National Park. I live with my parents, older brother, younger brother and younger sister.

I was home-schooled right from day one, alongside my siblings and couldn't dream of it being any other way! I love to spend my free time doing activities such as baking, reading and hanging out with friends – However, I also love to try new and exciting things whenever I get the opportunity!

My experience at OAC...

I began my studies with OAC as a keen year 8 student, studying music and French. These two subjects continued through to year 10 when I commenced full time study in 2016.

In what seemed like no time at all, I graduated from OAC in 2018 with my SACE and an ATAR under my belt! Personally, I believe that the flexibility OAC offers, along with the ever-present and wonderful support I received from my teachers, is what helped me to achieve my goals.

I feel that Open Access College allows individuals anywhere, to learn and grow in an environment that is encouraging and supportive, and free from the peer-pressure and expectations that society often lays upon us.

And today...

At the commencement of 2019, I was accepted into the University of South Australia to study a Bachelor of Midwifery.

I feel that as I head out into the university world, I not only have the academic skills I require, but because of the way both home-schooling and OAC works, I am already somewhat equipped in knowing the importance (and hard work) involved in self-driven and motivated study.

I am so thankful for the encouragement and support of the teachers at Open Access College and overall, the opportunities that OAC has given me!

Kiara Karpany-Day



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is Kiara.

I am 24 years old and Aboriginal (Ngarrindjeri), I live with my Mum and little sister and love being surrounded by my animals. These are 3 cats, 4 rabbits, 3 rats and a quail.

My experience at OAC...

I enrolled with OAC as an easier type of study to cope with. In 2011 I had chronic depression, anxiety and was diagnosed as having ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) in 2015. Giving up my studies seemed like a better option. Reducing my studies meant it took longer to get my SACE and ATAR.

Since I was very little I've always loved game and movie characters (especially villains) and found particular characteristic traits in everyday people and animals entertaining. This led to me wanting to pursue a career in the film industry as a character designer. With a lot of family support from my mum, step dad, sister, aunty and grandparents, as well as from my teachers, I kept going.

The OAC Aboriginal Support Officer, Michael Bradshaw never left my side through the ups and downs of study. Everyone's understanding and confidence in me as well as their smiles were reassuring on bad days. Their belief and passion towards helping me succeed is why I am where I am today.

And today...

I am beginning my first year of my Bachelor of Creative Arts (Visual Effects and Entertainment Design) at Flinders University. This includes experience with short films, animations, graphic novels and games for a professional portfolio to begin a career in the media industry.

I found that it's way too awesome to be just sitting on the sidelines-I needed to be a part of it. I wish each and every student the best for your studies: work at YOUR pace and make life work out YOUR way.

James Light



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is James.

I live in the Unley area of Adelaide with my parents and younger sister. I enjoy keeping fit through running and exercising at the gym, reading, computer gaming, and sharing fun times with friends and family.

My experience at OAC...

I started studying at Open Access College during Year 9, after I had struggled to maintain consistent attendance at school for the previous three years due to a fluctuating and often debilitating medical condition. OAC proved to be the ideal solution for me, as it not only provided me with high quality teaching, it kept me connected during those times when my physical condition isolated me.

What I also discovered at OAC were some excellent, caring, and considerate teachers who understood my situation and supported me to achieve results. It restored my confidence, and helped me to identify the strengths and skills I could build on to succeed at a high level. After so many uncertain (and often stressful) years, at last I could see the kind of pathway that I could travel on!

I completed the rest of my secondary schooling at OAC, whilst also attending night classes at the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE) to complete Certificates II and III in Information, Digital Media and Technology. The independent study skills developed during this time was another great benefit of studying at OAC.

And today...

I graduated from Year 12 last year. The day after I received my SACE results I was offered my first SATAC choice, so am now studying an Honours Degree in IT (Digital Health Systems) at Flinders University. I'm thrilled to now be able to combine my interest in computing with my experience within the health system, to learn how to apply digital technologies to benefit others. And my medical condition has also resolved so life is good!

Alexandra Wilson



Student Achievers of Open Access College | March 2019

My name is Alexandra.

I'm sixteen, and have lived my whole life in Adelaide, with a frog pond in my backyard and a house full of pets. Because of this, I have a love for animals and am planning a career in veterinary medicine.

I graduated Year 12 at The Heights School in 2018, studying Math Methods, Chemistry and English. I was also able to complete Biology through Open Access College. Apart from school, I spent my time swimming (for enjoyment, not competition), writing and sculpting. Whenever I can, I walk my dog around the reserves near home. It's also my job to ensure that there's a permanent supply of baked goods in the house.

My experience at OAC...

Though I was able to complete most of my SACE subjects through my school, Open Access provided me with the opportunity to study Biology where I otherwise could not.

The idea of taking a subject through a computer screen was a little intimidating at first. My first lesson came with a few technical issues, but I quickly found my stride, and discovered offline studying was easier to manage than my other formal lessons.

I am grateful for my time at Open Access, as the school supported my learning style and contributed to my overall success. The format of the class had me studying the required material both before and after our weekly lesson, and so I was memorising the textbook long before exams rolled around. My teacher was equally helpful, as she was always available to answer questions and provide feedback on assignment drafts.

And today...

After achieving a merit in Biology and a 97.95 ATAR, I was admitted into the Bachelor of Veterinary Science at the University of Adelaide. It's a six-year degree, and a lot of work, but I am unbelievably excited to get started.

I intend to work at my swim school, teaching children water skills while I complete my veterinary studies.

THANK YOU

Thank you to our Student Achievers
for telling your stories! We wish you
all the best for the future.



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