

Student Spotlight

A MELODY OF PASSION



The Story of Lily Downs

Darwin Boy

Laughing Along with Alexi Oblescuk

Meet the Future
Leaders of the
Territory

NT Youth Parliament 2024

Life of a Teacher
with Mr Whitty

Exploring the career of a teacher

Foreword



Pak Chan
Founder and Chair
NTSS

In recent months, the Northern Territory Student Society (NTSS) has recruited many talented writers and student journalists, who helped the organisation to grow successfully and to cover more youthful stories in the Northern Territory. We've also started to partner with multiple local and national organisations that will help amplify the voices of students in the NT, and allow more young Territorians to be heard, while also promoting local opportunities for young people.

The Northern Territory has one of the highest birth rates in the country, hence showing the great focus we should put on our education and youth development. As a new government cycle comes along with the Territory election, changes must be made to ensure that Territory youth are the top priority and to help young people in the NT obtain adequate resources for success. Starting from this issue of the Student Spotlight Magazine, we will include a 'Youth Career' segment, where we interview industry experts while acknowledging the hard work of the people who helped to build a better Territory.

Northern Territory is a state of potential, and we must not underestimate the power of our youths, especially in a new era of change where technological advances and breakthroughs are happening more often than ever before. As young people, we are more prone to adapting, which makes us the future of the Territory, and the engineers to a brighter future.

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Meet the Future Leaders of the Territory

By Lucy Tinapple

During late June to early July, The Youth Northern Territory had hosted the 2024 Youth Parliament and Youth Press Gallery program, a one week program where 25 young Territorians gather in the Parliament House as young politicians and discuss on important societal issues such as the increase in cost of living, career opportunities for the ones in need and education reforms. While most issues are related to youths in the NT, more serious topics such as domestic violence, sexual abuse and euthanasia were also brought to discussion as youth parliamentarians debate on the solutions for these issues.

Tahlia Biggs, the program director of NT youth parliament, said that youth parliament is a “*platform to showcase the abilities of young people in the Northern Territory*”

“*There are amazing young people in the Territory, but there are not enough platforms for those voices being uplifted*”, said Ms Biggs. “*This isn’t just a program for high-achieving kids [to be] another notch on their belts, but also for voices of the suppressed to be heard at the highest level*”



Ryan said that joining Youth Parliament allowed to experience the life of a politician (Image Source: The Y NT)

National youth activist Tabitha Stevenson-Jones, a volunteering task force member who assisted in organising the program, said that the growth among participants is remarkable as the program builds community, confidence, networks and independent thinking.

“[Youth Parliament] builds your ability to not only debate in a formal setting, but to also learn about your own beliefs and values and how you can connect with other people”, said Ms Stevenson-Jones.

Current Essington Senior School student representative Ryan Carpenter, one of the young participants of youth parliament, described the program as an interesting learning opportunity and had opened his mind to aspire to a career as a politician.

“Being able to attend Youth Parliament is a valuable learning experience, I get to meet a bunch of fabulous people who I enjoyed talking to and I have gained more insight about how this world works.” said Ryan.

As Youth Parliament NT gathers one of the most talented and dedicated youths in the Northern Territory, multiple perspectives and views are exchanged. In the future, Ms Biggs is looking for more opportunities in the NT to raise the political awareness of young people and to amplify youth voices.

“Society may view young people as naive, but young people actually care deeply about their communities”, added Ms Biggs, *“They want better for themselves and the Territory, and it is important to give them the knowledge and tools they need to be part of decision-making processes is really important”*

Based on the Youth Parliament Impact report, over 59% of participants agree and 23% strongly agree that they are confident in their ability to be a leader. Through the program, the future leaders of the Territory are born.

Image Source: The Y NT



A Team For Success!

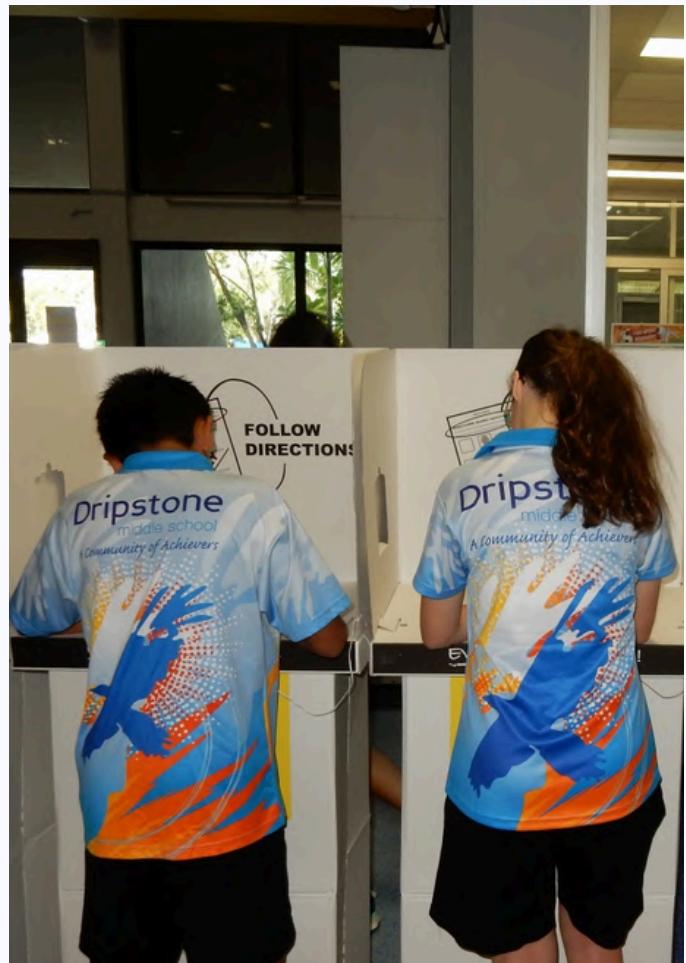
Dripstone Middle School Ambassadors

By Zafeera Jahana

Dripstone Middle School, located in the suburban heart of Darwin, is well-known for its range of leadership, self-development and learning opportunities. A great illustration of this is the Dripstone Middle School Student Ambassadors. They are divided into two groups: the Ambassadors for Learning, who are a part of the NT Learning Commission (NTLC) and promote student suggestions to teaching, and the Ambassadors for Community, students who are responsible for school events and positive change. Both groups listen to the student voice and represent the school's ideals with the help of 'teacher leaders', such as Mr. Triantafilos, who organise weekly classroom meetings.



*School Ambassadors are divided into learning ambassadors and community ambassadors
(Image: Facebook @Dripstone Middle School)*



School Ambassadors often participate in educational activities to improve their own personal skills (Image: Facebook @Dripstone Middle School)

Student Ambassadors rise to their role through self-sign ups, and after a 'probation period', are given certifications for their dedication to elevating voices of the student body. Many students are inspired to join as they were previously a part of the student council at their primary school.

In May 2024, over 100 students became official Ambassadors, with many sharing that their aim was to improve learning by "giving and receiving feedback". Ambassadors for Community not only help their school, but also fundraise for aid and welfare organisations in Darwin and around the world by hosting food sales. In 2023, they raised money for those impacted by earthquakes in Turkey, providing relief.

“We [also] did a lot of work with PAWS Darwin, a highlight for nearly everyone on the ambassadors. [This] included bake sales, sausage sizzles and volunteer work at the shelter”, reveals former President of the Community Ambassadors. Although her team focused on giving back to the community, both groups of School Ambassadors were necessary in curating a lively learning environment and encouraging positive initiatives.

A former Learning Ambassador shared that *“Being [an] ambassador at Dripstone helped [her] develop so many useful skills [such as] public speaking and problem solving, and it was a great school community to be a part of”.*

While most schools in Darwin have Student Representatives who are part of the NTLC and plan to make education enjoyable, they don’t always provide a sense of belonging. As a former member of the NTLC myself, I remember the lack of community events at my primary school. After hearing that *“... community ambassadors [at Dripstone] learned a lot of life skills... and help[ed] out the people who need[ed] it”*, I truly believe that other schools in the NT should also look into having Community Ambassadors of their own.

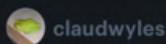
(Image: Facebook @Dripstone Middle School)



FILM REVIEWS

Opinions

Critics: Matilda Wilton and Claudia Wyles



The Fall Guy 2024

★★★½ ❤

Watched 28 Apr 2024



The Fall Guy, directed by David Leitch is a flashy, funny and entertaining action-comedy film filled with twists and turns and even a glow in the dark, neon fight scene. When watching this movie, I was entranced by all special effects and crazy stunt activity that really makes you think more about how stunt workers have such a demanding and important job within the film industry. Amongst all the thumbs up and gliding along the Sydney Harbor Bridge this film bothered me with a messy storyline. The film was jumping from hurt hero to mystery and crime to then perfect love story along with other wacky 'throw-ins' that made me feel confused and thrown off. I enjoyed the effects and soundtrack along with Ryan Goslings perfect performance along with Emily Blunt, and I advise for anyone to watch this film who is wanting some awesome movie magic.



It Ends with Us 2024

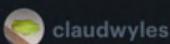
★

Watched 12 Aug 2024



It Ends with Us directed by Justin Baldoni, is based on the Collen Hoover book (It does not deserve to be called a novel) of the same title. I read the book in 2022, and have regretted doing so ever since, so I decided I would watch the movie, and how deeply I regret doing so. For starters the acting was on par with that of Water World (Kevin Reynolds), don't get me wrong there were some well-acted moments but unfortunately, they were hidden by the sheer amount of cringe that left their mouths. The script was horrendous, not as bad as the book, but gosh did I want to burn the cinema screen. The only redeeming quality about this film is the fact that they do not mention Finding Nemo or Ellen DeGeneres nearly as much as they did in the book, this was probably due to the fact that neither party wanted to be associated with this embarrassment to film.

Do not watch It Ends With.



Challengers 2024

★★★½ ❤

Watched 9 Jul 2024



This romantic tennis film, directed by the artistic and accomplished director Luca Guadagnino has created a beautiful but disappointing new drop in cinema with Challengers. Zendaya, Josh O'Conner and Mike Faist's all-star performance in the film as proposed rising tennis stars is brilliant and tension filled and caused me agitation while watching all the characters have their intimate relationship shuffle between the three of them every now and then within the film. What bothered me the most with this film was the editing and the chaotic relationship choices of why each of the main characters left one for the other or chose to manipulate them to break up with one another. The sloppiness of the characters just made me confused about who to hate next, until the final scene where I was as confused as why some of my favorite T.V. shows 'subtlety' decided to swap actors between series. Even the song Maneater by Nelly Furtado doesn't even feature in the film although using the song to promote also made me disappointed. Although this movie is frustrating it's also creative with beautiful cinematography and visual effects making the tennis scenes very powerful. If you see this film, Zendaya recommends watching it three times to understand each character, I'm saying to watch it if you love Zendaya's acting and Luca Guadagnino's past films.

Movie of the Month Recommendations



My Big Fat Greek Wedding

2002

★★★★½

claudwyles



BandSlam

2009

★★★★½

Matilda



A Quiet Place: Day One 2024

★★★★

Joel Zwick: My Big Fat Greek Wedding

Todd Graff: BandSlam

Michael Sarnoski: A Quiet Place: Day One

A RECIPE FOR LOVE

By Sarina Quadri

The last time Grace cooked, it felt like she was simply going through the motions of a life she no longer understood, the once-vibrant spark of her passion buried beneath the crushing weight of her depression.

When the news came that her grandmother had passed and left her the café, she wasn't sure what to feel; inheriting a place filled with memories she'd tried to forget seemed kind of wrong.

Grace hesitated at the café's entrance, her hand trembling as she reached out for the door. It had been almost a year since she last felt the warmth of a stove or cooking up something. This cafe was hers now, but was she ready for such a responsibility?

Pushing aside all the negative thoughts, she got to work on the renovations. After a month of hard work, the cafe was finally in business. Customers were frequent and they had got enough staff to keep the place open. With every small victory, she felt a glimmer of something she thought she had lost forever — a tiny spark of hope.

Then, one afternoon, as she was wiping down the counter, the doorbell chimed, and in walked a figure she was not expecting to see.

Alice, her old high school friend, the one who had left for Perth years ago, now stood in her café, looking just as surprised to see her as she was to see her.

Her familiar smile brought back a flood of memories, and for the first time in a long while, Grace felt something other than the sadness that had surrounded her for so long.

"Grace?" Alice's voice was warm, filled with the same kindness she remembered. "I heard you were back. I had to see it for myself."

She managed a small smile, the corners of her mouth lifting with an unfamiliar lightness. "Yeah, I'm... I'm here," she replied, her voice softer than she intended.

As they talked, it became clear that the years hadn't dimmed their connection. Alice, with her easygoing nature, began to draw her out of the shell she had built around herself. She listened, offered advice when she needed it, and—most importantly—she simply stayed.

Over time, Alice started showing up at the café more often, always with a new idea or a recipe she'd picked up. She taught her little tricks—how to whip up a perfect frothy cappuccino, how to make the best use of the small kitchen space, and even how to bring out the flavors in dishes she'd long since forgotten how to prepare. Her presence became medicine for Grace.

Grace found herself looking forward to the days Alice would visit. Slowly, the café began to come alive, not just with the sounds of customers and the aroma of fresh coffee, but with the revived passion that had once driven her.

For the first time in what felt like forever, Grace dared to imagine a future—not just for the café, but for herself. And with her best friend Alice by her side, she began to believe that maybe, just maybe, she could find her way back to the life she had once loved.

PAIN OR GAIN?

A DIVE INTO THE TEENAGE GYM CULTURE

By Pak Chan

Among the many activities, going to a gym seemed to be one of the first choices of many teenagers as it is estimated that 33.8% of the 15+ population in Australia participates in fitness activities. While it is traditionally taught and recommended that exercising helps maintain good mental and physical health, recent studies and opinions cast doubts on the gym culture as recent studies tie gym culture with toxic masculinity and body shaming, leaving the question of how the current gym culture is impacting teenagers unanswered.

Keandra Danadyaksa, a sixteen-year-old and a frequent gymgoer, said that going to the gym and lifting weights had boosted his confidence.

“And I started going to the gym because everyone was telling me I was skinny, even my friends ... [and] I didn’t want to accept that”, said Keandra, “I wanted to change and get better”.

Keandra has been going to the gym since year eight and does training six days a week at his home gym. He claims that by going to the gym, he has grown mentally stronger and become more resilient in life through his consistent training.



“Nowadays I’m less prone to giving up and have built a discipline towards difficult tasks”, added Keandra.

Mental health expert and founder of Two Two One, a local mental health charity, Sacha King, said that recent studies had shown that the benefits of exercising could be far greater than what is typically thought.

“A study was conducted a few years ago and found that exercise can have as much impact on depression and improve your mood as anti-depressant medication”, said Ms King.

‘Exercising will make you happy’ has been a scientific fact, yet going to the gym appears to be different than other sports as going to the gym as lifting weights involves very minimal human interaction. Despite influencers suggest that going to the gym can be an alternative to talking to others, Ms. King compared talking to someone as ‘seeing a doctor’ for mental health.



Ms King said that while exercising benefits mental health, it is a preventative measure and to be a part of holistic wellness.

“We discuss exercise at something that maintains your wellness but does not replace therapy or health care”, said Ms King, “exercise may be maintaining your health but if you are unwell you may need to see a doctor; talking to someone is kind of like seeing your doctor”.

The primary goal of exercising could be simple, for better mental and physical health instead of attractiveness. However, if teenagers are feeling insecure or are experiencing intimidation, Ms King recommends reaching out to someone you trust.

“Make sure you reach out to someone you trust, a GP or counsellor would be a great start” said Ms King. “If you want to feel more confident in yourself, rather than trying to change something you don’t like, start with enhancing something you do like and love yourself for the amazing things you can do”.



This article is supported by Two Two One, a local mental health charity that offers mental health first aid training to schools, businesses and communities and has received high commendation for their work. Their founder and managing director, Sacha King, also received the Northern Territory Local Hero award in 2023.

A Melody of Passion

The Story of Lily Downs

By Kasfiha Tahsin

This month, we are thrilled to introduce Lily Downs, a Year 11 student from Darwin High School whose dedication to music and singing has made her stand out in her school community.

Lily's love for music began at a young age. "I was little, and I just loved listening and performing. This is what I was passionate about," she recalls. Her passion for singing has only grown since then, leading her to some remarkable milestones. One of her most cherished moments so far was her first solo performance in Year 6, which sparked her journey in music. Looking ahead, Lily is excited about an upcoming opportunity to sing in New York next year, a dream come true for any young artist.

However, not all Lily's performances have gone off without a hitch. She fondly remembers a funny incident from Year 8 at Darwin Middle School when she accidentally bumped into a prop on stage. "I am still embarrassed about that incident," she laughs, demonstrating her ability to reflect on these moments with humor.

Youth Community



Regarding inspiration, Adele holds a special place in Lily's heart. "*I really admire [Adele's] style and work-life balance*", she says. She also draws inspiration from Taylor Swift, who she believes surpasses many others in the music industry. This admiration for her idols is evident in Lily's performances, especially in the musical theatre genre, which she enjoys for its storytelling aspect.

Outside of music, Lily is a passionate reader and writer. "*I like anything creative. Music is probably my main passion*", she explains. At school, her favourite subjects are music and drama, thanks to the supportive and inspiring teachers she has.

Lily's involvement in extracurricular activities is impressive. She participates in the NT Music School Uprising Programs and performs in musicals outside school. Among her achievements, she takes particular pride in a Year 10 performance where, despite initial nerves, she delivered a memorable solo that demonstrated her growth and confidence.

Looking towards the future, Lily aspires to study music at Oxford University and hopes to write her own albums. "*I like to start writing my own albums and see where it takes me. I want people to listen to my music and come to see my performances*", she shares. Her ultimate goal is to build a career in music and make a lasting impact through her art.

Through her experiences of performing live, Lily has learned a valuable lesson, "*Don't stress about it. Don't overthink it. If something goes wrong, pretend it is right. The audience doesn't know you've messed up. And have fun!*"





DARWIN BOY

**LAUGHING ALONG
WITH ALEXI OBLESCUK**

By Pak Chan

In early July, local teenage comedian Alexi Oblescuk from Darwin High School had his first 50-minute stand-up comedy special *Darwin Boy* at the Darwin Fringe Festival as the youngest performing comedian. It is always said that ‘laughter is the best medicine’, but to Alexi, laughter is also a future career he aspires to and his pathway to a successful future. Starting with the Class Clowns High School Comedy Competition hosted by the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Alexi then performed at local clubs and soon made his name as one of the youngest comedians in the NT.

“Comedy is simply a person going on stage trying to be funny”, said Alexi, “It sounds easy, but it is one of the hardest art forms”.

Started watching stand-up comedy at ten, Alexi never thought he would make the stage performing stand-up comedy until he learned about Class Clowns from his friend Chay.

“I started watching Richard Pryor’s 1997 comedy special when I was around ten. At first, I didn’t understand a lot of his jokes, but as I grew, I started laughing along and developed a strong interest in stand-up comedy,” said Alexi, “My friend Chay first told me about Class Clowns as he had to do it with his drama class, I found it really cool so I put together a set and performed at the competition, and I won.”

Being a young Indigenous person, Alexi’s comedy contains a lot of material related to realities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. He believes that through his comedy, he can showcase the abilities of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

“Indigenous people started with a low [social status] in the past, and through my success, I hope to show the change that took place”, added Alexi, “I am always mindful that I only joke about my Indigenous [identity and culture], as it is the one culture that I understand, never joke about things that you don’t understand.”

In the future, Alexi hopes to participate in the RAW Comedy Competition hosted by the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and take the win as a young Territorian. As his outstanding performance at the Darwin Fringe Festival marks a milestone in his endeavour as a young comedian, Alexi hopes to grow his popularity as a professional comedian in the future and enter the film and television industry.



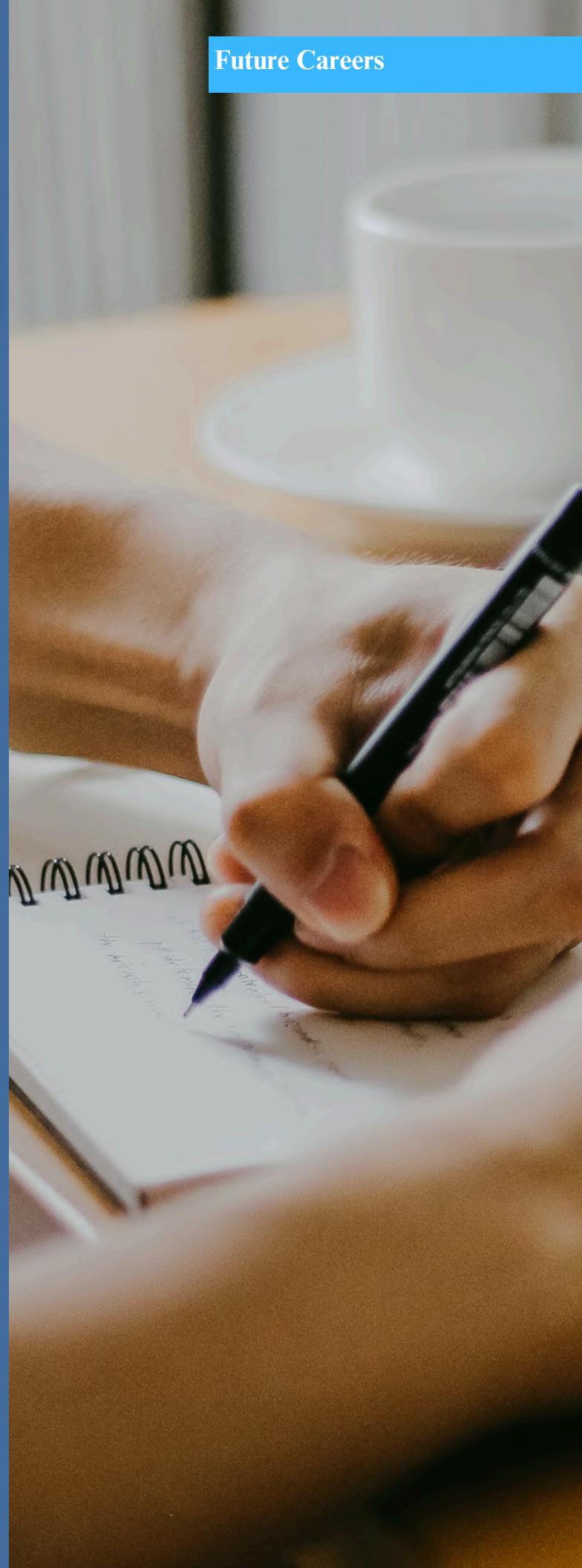
PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

What is PLP and How to Get Ready For It

By Amy Zhao

By the end of high school students will branch off and pursue what they desire. For some students, their career interest has prerequisites. It is important that students have a plan for their education in these 3 years. For the many students that are in high school and are not yet sure of what they could possibly pursue, it is important that they leave school having done the classes they may be required to have done. To ensure this, Darwin High School has a PLP class compulsory for one semester for year 10 students. All students need to achieve an overall C level grade to complete the class and gain their Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET). In the span of the semester, students are met with assessments that require them to think about their future and possible paths they could walk.

PLP classes offer a lot more than just assessments to assist students. Teachers and other figures in the school such as the careers counselors often visit classes and assist students in developing an educational plan. These members can recommend helpful classes and make students wary of any prerequisite subjects. By having this conversation students can explore what careers play to their personal strengths and interests which will improve their enjoyment of school and increase their focus during these hours. Knowing what the best choice for the rest of their high school years will boost confidence and give people a clear understanding of what they are working towards.



To help them develop their plan, students are given the opportunity to go on work experience. We have interviewed a few students that are taking PLP this school semester and summed up how PLP lessons are useful.

Work studies allow students to explore various career options firsthand. By working in different industries or fields, students are exposed to various professions, helping them discover their interests and passions. This early exploration can significantly impact their future career decisions and can act as a catalyst to them adjusting their education to fit their aspirations.

It's essential for high schoolers to reach out to trusted adults, such as teachers, counselors, or family members, when facing setbacks both in and out of school. These individuals can offer guidance, support, and practical advice on how to overcome obstacles.

While some aspects of education may be beyond their control, high schoolers can focus on what they can control, such as their attitude, effort, and willingness to seek help when needed. By channeling their energy into productive activities and maintaining a positive mindset, they can better cope with challenges and setbacks.

Taking care of their physical and mental well-being is crucial when facing educational challenges. They should prioritize activities that help them relax and recharge, such as exercise, hobbies, spending time with friends and family, and getting enough sleep. Engaging in self-care activities can improve mood, reduce stress, and enhance resilience.

Instead of dwelling on setbacks, use them as opportunities for growth and learning. Reflecting on what went wrong, identifying areas for improvement, and developing strategies to overcome similar challenges in the future can help them build resilience and develop problem-solving skills.



HOW TO GET BETTER AT THINGS

MASTERING SELF-IMPROVEMENT

By Kasfiha Tahsin

Imagine standing on a beach at sunset, watching the sky turn a rich orange and purple as the sun dips below the horizon.

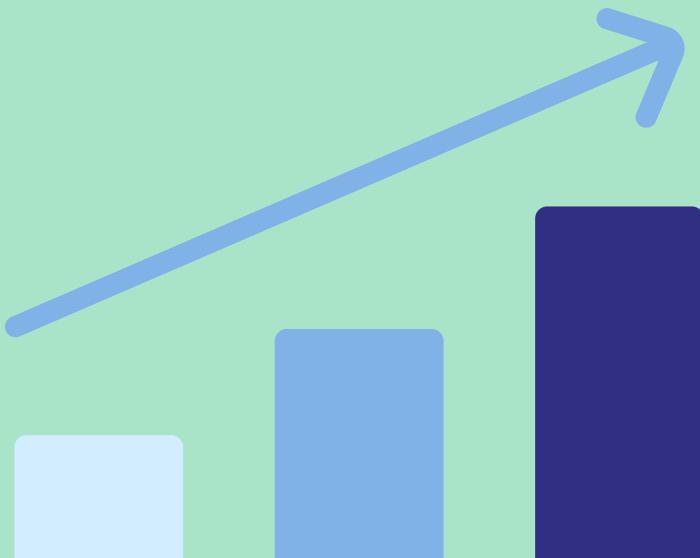
The beach stretches out with endless possibilities, but you're hesitant to take a step forward. This is how many people live—held back by doubt and missing out on the chances that could make their lives brighter. As one of the foremost of the Founding Fathers of the United States, Benjamin Franklin's observation, "*Most men die at 25, we just bury them at 75,*" suggests that many people stop genuinely living and thriving at an early age, even though they continue to exist physically. But what if you had a map and a guide that could show you how to overcome these fears and unlock your true potential? I stand before you today with a simple idea. The Power of Self-Improvement.

A great philosopher, Socrates, said 'Know thyself.' It means that the only person who knows me properly is myself. I really feel that I am the only one who knows where my weakness is and where my strength is. At first, we all had to sort out those problems ourselves. We must practice those values, such as honesty, punctuality, hard work, perseverance, respect for others' opinions and advice, etc. We also bear in mind that some people hurt us a lot; they often criticize our work, but we never give up. People often criticize our new work, but we must be very passionate about it and determine that we can do it.

We always have in our brains that the only competitor of ours is ourselves. If we can improve ourselves every second, we shall eventually be at the top. Life is not a bed of roses; our life is full of ups and downs, joy and sorrows. In our lives, we must face many opticals, but by embracing self-help, we're not just improving our own lives—we're opening the door to a future where we can achieve our dreams and inspire others to do the same.

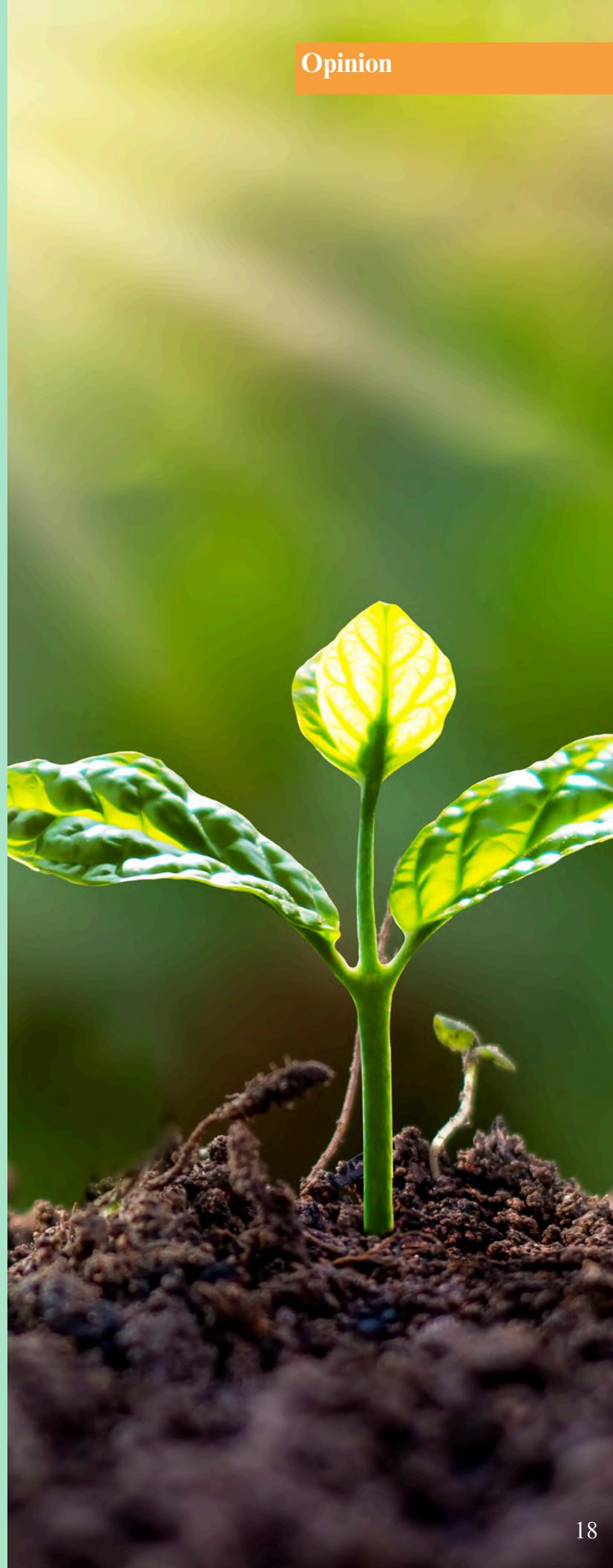
Regain control of your decision-making. Do it because you want to, not because people told you to. Do not let people take away your dreams. I relinquished all command, and with some help from my friends, I found somewhere I could seek help in harder situations. It was one of the most complex decisions I ever had to make. But the fact that I could admit to myself that I needed some help – I was going to do something about it – was a critical moment.

Another effective tool is talking about all your thoughts and emotions. Sometimes, the best way to get through the day is by setting tiny, achievable goals that will take you and me from one minute to the next. It's easy to bask in the sun but not so easy to enjoy the rain. But one can't exist without the other. The weather always changes—sentiments of sadness and happiness merit equal mental bandwidth.



It's important to recognize that everyone needs to express their feelings in some form. So, why not make it normal to discuss how we're really doing? Just as we openly share our excitement about winning a competition or our frustration about a grade, we should also feel comfortable talking about deeper emotions. For instance, instead of just focusing on achievements or setbacks, why not also address things like struggling to get out of bed or feeling lost about one's future? Helping shouldn't be seen solely as a last resort for severe issues; instead, it should be viewed as a valuable opportunity to step away from the noise in our heads, the pressures of the world, and the expectations we put on ourselves.

Albert Einstein once said, "*Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.*" You might not be good at one thing, but you will be better at three others. I learned it the more challenging way. But the truth is, you cannot make everyone happy. What you can do, however, is make yourself happy, which is very, very important. Make sure you love what you do. If you don't do what you love, things will make you suffer and stressed. You don't want that, do you? So, have courage and be kind. Have faith in yourself. Figure out what makes you happy and do it. Seize the day. Dance. Sing. Fall in love. Make your lives extraordinary. Be the change you want to see. And most importantly, learn to embrace the randomness.



LIFE OF A TEACHER

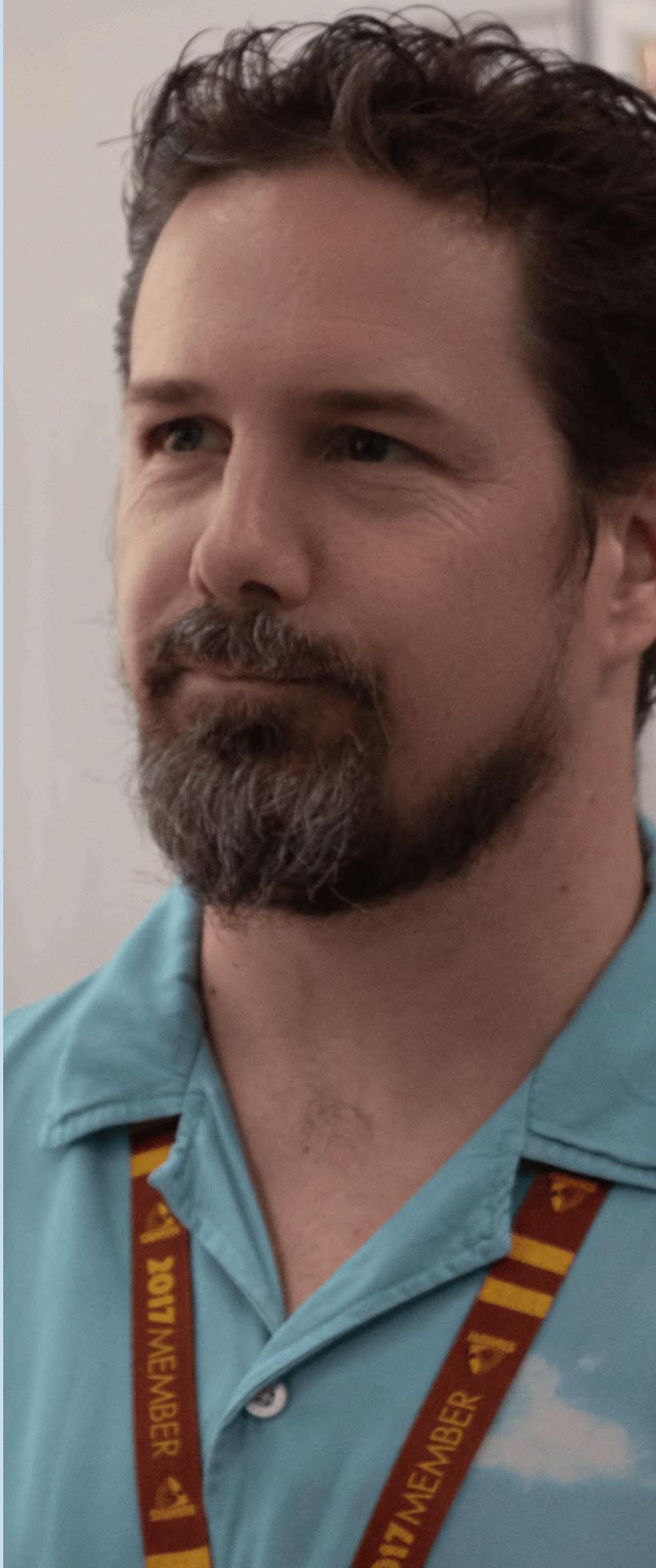
WITH MR WHITTY

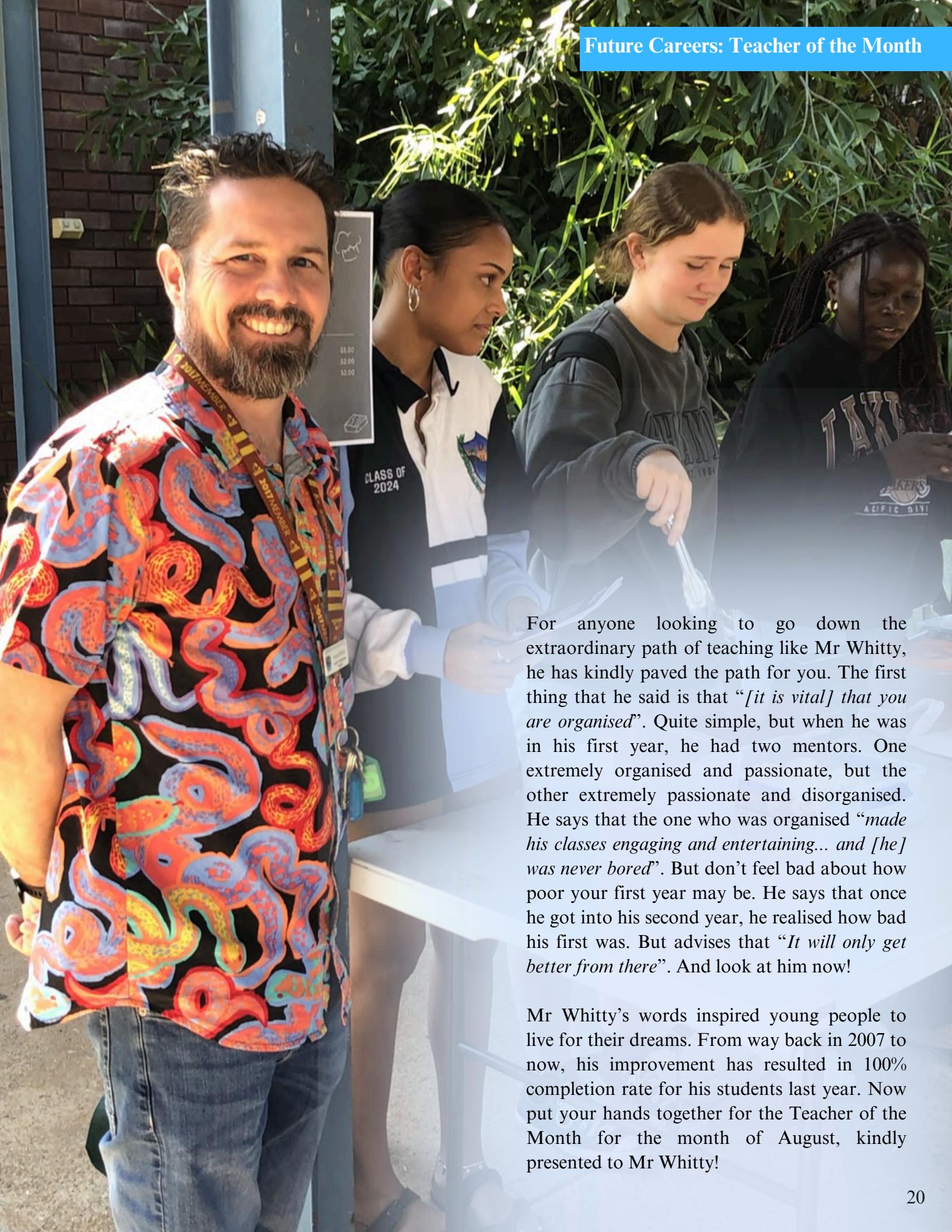
By Jethro Llewellyn and Azaan Iqbal

Meet Mr Hayden Whitty, an enthusiastic and trustworthy teacher at Darwin High School. He was born up here in the Top End, just like all of you! He says that when he was in year 12, “he had no idea of what he was going to do.” When he completed his PLP equivalent, he applied for journalism and teaching experience. Which led him down this extraordinary path. He started with teaching primary and secondary for 15 years in Katherine. But eventually moved up here to Darwin in 2015 to teach at Darwin High, “The best school [he has] taught at.”

Mr Whitty explains how he is “[so proud] of having a couple of students do some remarkable things”. Some of these being achievements in music, arts and their communities. He says that “[these are] some really good and exciting achievements” that have occurred while he has been teaching.

One issue that Mr Whitty wants to bring awareness to is the spike in youth crime and literacy deficiency in the Top End. He says that “[he has seen] a spike in this topic... [and also] lots of negative things in young people’s behaviours”. With the problem being that “The NT... has a very small population compared to the states of Australia, and we are not a well-resourced territory”. Which does not help the issues of education up here.





For anyone looking to go down the extraordinary path of teaching like Mr Whitty, he has kindly paved the path for you. The first thing that he said is that “[it is vital] that you are organised”. Quite simple, but when he was in his first year, he had two mentors. One extremely organised and passionate, but the other extremely passionate and disorganised. He says that the one who was organised “made his classes engaging and entertaining... and [he] was never bored”. But don’t feel bad about how poor your first year may be. He says that once he got into his second year, he realised how bad his first was. But advises that “It will only get better from there”. And look at him now!

Mr Whitty’s words inspired young people to live for their dreams. From way back in 2007 to now, his improvement has resulted in 100% completion rate for his students last year. Now put your hands together for the Teacher of the Month for the month of August, kindly presented to Mr Whitty!

FRIEND OR FOE?

By Rachel Matthews

Reyna took a deep breath. She felt overwhelmed. She watched Zane call over for some backup officers. She knew who the criminal was- her best friend was from high school.

As much as she wanted to catch him and find out why he was doing all of this, she also wanted not to accept that her only best friend in high school was doing this. But he sent a blood-written letter on her doorstep at midnight with a threatening letter which read “YOU’LL NEVER FIND ME!” She had so many questions. How did he know where she lived? What happened to him? Why is he doing all the wrongdoings? Why was he killing innocent people?

“Reyna!” called Zane, snapping Reyna back to reality. Reyna quickly went over to Zane and the other backup officers. Zane and Reyna explained what the backup officers had to do and then they split up. After a couple hours Reyna sat down to rest. She decided to check the time which showed 19:51. Reyna put down her phone and a second later her phone went off. Reyna clicked on the message which was from an unknown number. The message read “48 hours till the whole city blows up”.

Reyna stood up and looked around for Zane spotting Zane near a fountain. “Zane, you should see this!” called out Reyna. Zane immediately ran towards her and read the message. “48 hours till he blows up the city then we should catch him and put him behind bars for life,” reassured Zane. Reyna nodded in agreement. They searched till midnight finally heading back to headquarters.



Reyna couldn't get any sleep, so she tossed and turned in her bed. How could she get any sleep knowing the entire city was in danger? Paris! The city of love could be dead in 48 hours if she couldn't do anything in the remaining hours. She got up and went to her desk thinking hard about where he could be taking people and killing people. She thought of all the places that she knew that he might like. Then she got it.

She recalled a memory from when they were walking back home after school. He told her that he was an orphan because some people killed his parents who accidentally witnessed a murder. Reyna remembered it all like it was yesterday. He ended up waking up in the hospital and found out his parents were gone. He told her about an abandoned warehouse but after that, he changed into a whole new person. He started bullying others, taking other kid's lunch money, making others do his assignment, and beating up kids who got in his way some of them ending up in the hospital. He skipped class landed in after-school detentions and kept getting suspended. The incident changed him from innocent to a monster.

Reyna remembered him telling her that he wanted to get revenge in the spot where it happened. She knew where he was...

TO BE CONTINUED

When Things Aren't So "Sigma"

Why We Are More Susceptible to Tyranny

By Pak Chan

As words such as ‘sus’ and ‘rizz’ run rampant on today’s internet, many younger generations, ‘Gen Alphas’ in particular, are caught on this trend.

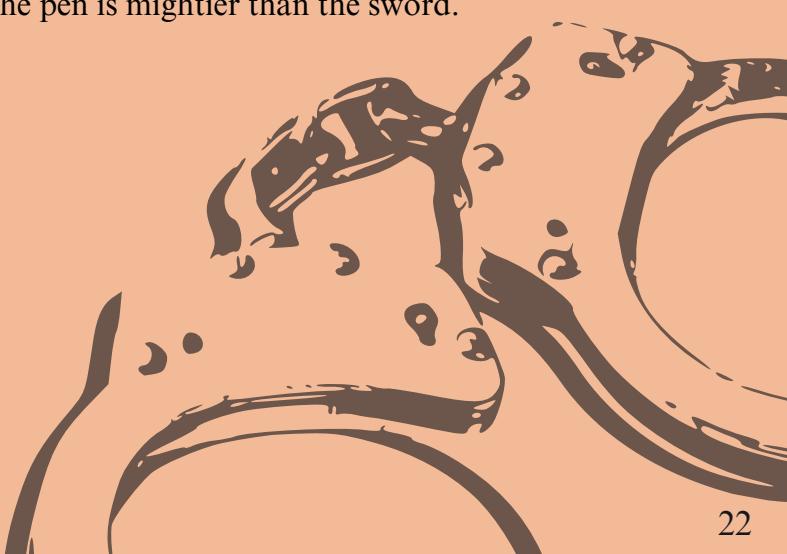
As these words move away from internet ‘memes’ to daily conversations, fear arises regarding the infectious ‘brain rots’. Some would say ‘the generation is doomed’, for most would be too addicted to the internet to learn anything. However, the real situation could be far worse as the rise of ‘brain rots’ and ‘Gen Z language’ impedes our ability to express ourselves, making us more susceptible towards language control and tyranny.

In 1984 by George Orwell, a remarkable moment was the portrayal of the language ‘newspeak’ (The new version of English), where the language is ‘cut to the bone’ as the totalitarian government in 1984 cancels out hundreds of words every day to achieve the control of expression. A memorable moment was the cancellation of synonyms and even antonyms, where ‘excellent’ becomes ‘plusgood’, and ‘bad’ becomes ‘ungood’.

Orwell’s remark was almost prophetic as it reflected our modern-day use of language, where words we use become simpler for the sake of a ‘faster digestion’ of knowledge. Twenty-minute long videos are cut down into 10 separate ‘reels’ for the sake of speed, and our use of language simplifies for more readers to understand.

The real-life practice of Orwell’s description can also be directly reflected in modern totalitarian governments. A great example is the Chinese Communist regime, where Simplified Chinese characters with fewer strokes are promoted to less-educated children over traditional Chinese to have more literate workers, but not literate enough to stand up for themselves. As a language simplifies, the meaning of words becomes more generalised. A study in the United States found a vocabulary size decline among adults between 1974 and 2016. This shows that younger generations are more susceptible to propaganda that contains swooping generalisations, hence we become more easily manipulated as our language decays.

As ‘charisma’ becomes ‘rizz’, and ‘suspicious’ becomes ‘sus’, the slow decay of the English language is evident. We are becoming more susceptible to propaganda and thought control as we think, read and write based on our generalised modern-day language. However, it is crucial to note that democracy is yet to die if intelligent people still exist. To prevent tyranny and thought control, a thing we can do to equip ourselves is to read and learn more as the pen is mightier than the sword.



DO YOU KNOW A Student of the Month?

Fill in the form and nominate now!

<https://forms.gle/EbJzEs5sh7eriGNQ7>





NT STUDENT SOCIETY PRESENTS

AUGUST EVENT 2024

PHOTOGRAPHY competition



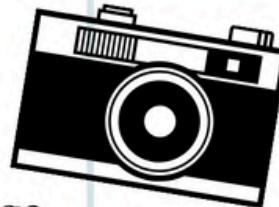
theme: **REALITIES**

We ask competitors to produce their work based on their *daily lives* and tell *stories* about their lives.

The theme is chosen as it can uncover youth issues while acting as a vessel for voicing out.

terms & conditions

- Must be **12 - 19 years** of age
- Must be currently living in the NT
- Must allow the NTSS to publish the image
- Must submit to our **submission portal:**
<https://forms.gle/7yyu71QkcajyKrkX9>
- Each contestant may submit **ONE** entry only



Enter Now



timeline

- Competition begins: **6th August 2024**
Competition ends: **5th September 2024**
Judge's verdict finalised: **20th September 2024**
Winners announced: **24th September 2024**

WINNERS WILL HAVE THEIR ENTRIES PUBLISHED ON OUR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT MAGAZINE

For more information, visit our Instagram page: @nt_student_society

Student Spotlight

NORTHERN
TERRITORY
Student
Society

A magazine for NT students, by NT students



Promote young
Territory talents



Free space for student
voice



Art and literature
exchange

Learn More:



Northern Territory Students' Society.

email: ntstudentsociety.inquiries@gmail.com

About Us.

We are a student-led group focusing on recognising achievement and promoting a positive youth culture within the NT. Established by dedicated students in 2023, we have a mission on focusing on student well-being and achievements.

Our reason.

Due to information bombardment regarding problematic youths in the NT, public perception has always been negatively viewed. With this, young people that strive for excellence are overlooked and have fewer resources and opportunities. We hope to obtain a greater positive media attention for the young students in the NT, and to change the negative perception whilst creating more opportunities for students.

Why join NTSS?

Students will be able to play a role in making positive community change and to take in leadership roles. We also provide an outlet for young people to voice out on issues. To join, simply fill out the online registration form and become a member!

The Student Spotlight project.

In 2024, the NTSS is currently working on publishing a free online magazine known as "Student Spotlight", a magazine that covers young talents in the NT, showcasing students' original works. "Student Spotlight" is currently looking for freelance writers and voluntary journalists. If interested, please fill out the online volunteering form.

Schools in the Northern Territory.

The NTSS is looking for support from all schools in the NT. By spreading positive influence across schools, we aim to create more united and positive school cultures. To learn more about getting your school involved in our initiative, please contact us via email.

TELL YOUR STORY.

Become a writer for the
Student Spotlight
magazine

Sign up at: <https://forms.gle/V53nDU58DMWRrGpW9>



Scan Here!

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We would love to hear from you!

Fill in the feedback form to help us improve



Disclaimer: Opinions and views expressed in this publication does not represent the stance of the Northern Territory Student Society.

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