



Reigniting the desire to come to school

Their Excellencies immerse themselves in the transformation of young lives

Pictures by **Anthony McKee**

The power of early intervention in secondary school to build self-esteem and turn young lives around was palpable during a visit to Hands On Learning (HOL) at the Collingwood Alternative School last week by HOL Patron and Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, and Mr Michael Bryce AM AE.

Young people were front and centre as past student and HOL Director, Julie Klein hosted a round table of students, principals, teachers, parents and supporters sharing their first-hand experience of how Hands On Learning works to stop kids dropping out of school.

Collingwood's David Chebbo described his pride and satisfaction helping build the Victorian Ash table that was the centrepiece of

the meeting, while Sale College student Adam Schade travelled six hours to tell Her Excellency about his transformation from regular suspensions to school leader this year. McClelland College's Katie Downie was frank about just how much she enjoys Hands On Learning every week – explaining that the key difference for her is that she really wants to come to school now and has a vision for her future.

Her Excellency commended the success of students involved in the Hands On Learning approach, which increases their participation and confidence at school.

handsonlearning.org.au



Julie introduces video snapshots of HOL alumni sharing the long term benefits they derived from HOL. The videos highlighted how and why HOL works and compliment the quantitative evidence of lower unemployment, significant drops in detentions and suspensions, and higher attendance rates for HOL students. Follow this link to watch <http://goo.gl/sXKjK> - HOL Alumni share their stories

HOL Alumni share their stories



Hands On Learning Australia Chairman Ian Ward-Ambler welcomes Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC CVO, Governor-General of Australia.



Hands On Learning founder and CEO Russell Kerr and Her Excellency discuss how opportunities to succeed are critical in the middle years of school when young people are experiencing developmental changes, changing relationships at home, peer pressure, and coping with the transition from primary to secondary school.



McClelland College's Katie Downie meets the Governor-General, accompanied by fellow students Tim Mullins and Josh Hosking, and Sale College's Adam Schade (centre).



Collingwood Alternative School Head of campus Chris Astley (right) and the Governor-General congratulate student David Chebbo (left) on his contribution to the roundtable discussion, and all the infrastructure projects he has been involved in around the school.



McClelland College's Katie Downie presents the Governor-General with a hand-crafted celebration of her visit, made especially for their Excellencies by the McClelland College Hands On Learning students.



HOL Founder and CEO Russell Kerr joins Her Excellency to congratulate Sale College's Adam Schade.

Adam's mum Maxine Barnes also participated in the roundtable, telling their Excellencies that doing Hands On Learning has made a huge difference to Adam both at school and at home. "He was rebellious and challenged authority. Now Adam is a school leader with so much more respect for everyone. I am just so proud of him," Ms Barnes added.



The Governor-General departs after a thoroughly inspiring visit. Their Excellencies spoke with so many involved in HOL, absorbing everyone's stories and celebrating the way these young people are realising their potential. We sincerely thank our Patron and Mr Bryce for their time and the connection they made with students, teachers, principals and supporters.