



EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM INNOVATIVE COLLEGE LIBRARIES

JAMES MCGORAN looks at how his library, and school libraries in general, can make a beneficial impact on students and the wider school community.

The Mary McKillop Library, St Patrick's College, Launceston, is a thriving hub of activity, involving teachers, students, staff, parents and families. The library's core services inherently promote this community outreach as a by-product of servicing our clients. Five years ago, the college introduced a literacy program, and the library offered additional class bookings to provide our students with an excellent pro-literacy space. This is just one example of the way we work with the learning enhancement faculty, tailoring services to meet individual student plans, suggesting different resources depending on the requirement, offering flexible times, and making changes to our regular procedures if they no longer fit with student needs. One of our primary goals is to provide a safe space for all students, facilitating their academic and personal growth. Every one of the library staff works towards this, knows to ask questions, collaborate and support each other. We don't just offer academic and literacy services. The library has expanded into offering loans of digital devices for those students who, for whatever reason, are unable to bring a device of their own. We do this in collaboration with our curriculum and pastoral care team, the business manager and the IT department. We run a similar program with textbooks for disadvantaged students. This willingness for collaboration further expands the library's reach within our community.

Mirroring our physical services are our online services. We're lucky to have a web administrator who works with us. As mobile platforms have risen in popularity, she has created

a dynamic webpage for the library that changes depending on the platform used, and hosts over 500 pages of original content and study guides that we've built up over the years. This means that our website is accessible to anyone who needs to use it.

In addition, we have twice now hosted the Launceston Human Library, exposing our students to valuable life experiences. We know they appreciate this, it's an amazing opportunity and we highly recommend it to other schools.

The college supports an active old collegians group within the community: reunions, sporting activities, and fundraisers. We have an excellent college archive that is separate from the library. Its collection encompasses photographs, records, newsletters and more, and there is an in-depth archival reference service. At the same time, the library offers public access to our digital assets, including digital records of our history, such as pamphlets, building plans, photographs, trophies and art works. Through a mixture of project and volunteer work this area continues to expand.

Community is incredibly valuable for schools, and school libraries. Nothing happens in a vacuum, and it is important to get out there and think about how to adapt what you do to best help your community. Adapting spaces and services enriches the sense of ownership in the community and builds the strength of belonging in our students. 🌟

JAMES MCGORAN AALIA

Library Technician

Mary McKillop Library, St Patrick's College

@jamesmcoran