

## **Girls take charge in Australia's largest girls-only student leadership conference**

The Gold Coast will this week play host to 165 female student leaders from across Australia, New Zealand, USA, and Canada as part of the annual Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia's Student Leadership Conference, taking place at Bond University from 4 - 7 January.

The four-day program, designed specifically for girls, equips attendees, who are all due to take up student leadership positions, to become effective and motivational leaders during their final year of school in 2017.

Student Rachel Dierdericks, from Mary MacKillop College, Brisbane, is excited to learn leadership styles that she can use within her community.

'I hope to build new and meaningful connections with other young female leaders as well as with my fellow school student leaders to bring inspiration and strengthen our school as a family,' said Rachel.

Rachel is hosting US student Nina Chukwura from The Ethel Walker School in Connecticut who believes the confidence and resilience that come along with being a leader are vital to leading a successful life.

'It is so important that we instil these traits in young women, such as ourselves, so we are ready to enter college and the workforce knowing that we are capable and powerful women who are valued members of society making an impact not only within our own lives but on the lives of others.'

'I want to use my enhanced leadership skills to be the most effective leader of a paediatric hospital – my career aspiration – and to use my skills to continue my vision of working with and uplifting women,' said Nina.

Executive Officer of The Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia, Loren Bridge, said the conference gave students the skills and self-belief to become strong leaders and overcome discrimination barriers.

'The collaboration between these upcoming leaders is energising, inspiring and incredible to watch. The girls leave the conference ready to lead their schools and communities and ready to take those skills to life beyond school.'

'We are equipping and empowering today's generation of students to smash the remaining gender disparities in senior leadership roles – and we can't wait to see them do it,' said Loren.

The stellar line up of speakers will give the girls an exciting glimpse into the many forms of leadership needed to make real change to the world, through business, social enterprises and as individuals.

Speakers include:

- **Liz Atkinson-Volpe** - Zest Marketing & Project Gen Z, a project designed to educate one million new young entrepreneurs by 2030.
- **Stephanie Lorenzo** – Project Futures, creating meaningful experiences that raise funds and educate this generation to end human trafficking and exploitation
- **Ashley Jubinville** – The Kitchen Coach – teaching girls to listen to their bodies and make healthy choices that reduce food stress
- **Nic Marchesi & Lucas Patchett** – 2016 Young Australians of the Year from Orange Sky Laundry, a free mobile laundry service for the homeless aiming to reconnect them with the community and improve lives
- **Tracey Vieira** – CEO Screen Queensland and Telstra 2016 Queensland Business Women of the Year.

The conference concludes with an exciting Surf-Lifesaving challenge that will see all 165 girls converge on Burleigh Heads beach for a lesson from Surf Lifesaving Queensland.

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**About the Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia:**

The Alliance is a not for profit organisation which advocates for and supports the distinctive work of girls' schools in their provision of unparalleled opportunities for girls. It represents all school sectors – independent, Catholic and state, and has over 160 member schools throughout Australasia, representing over 132,000 girls and 10,000 educators.

**INTERVIEWS AND PHOTOS AVAILABLE.**

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