

*Summary:* The Lasallian Family is changing lives throughout Australasia. Explore Lasallian student achievements both in and out of the classroom to see the impact of De La Salle schools.

## **Educational Excellence In Action: Award-Winning Lasallian Students**

Great things are happening in Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea thanks to Lasallians! The De La Salle Brothers and the broader Lasallian Family work to uplift underserved communities through life-changing educational missions. For centuries Lasallians have answered the call to serve youth, especially those who are poor and living under the burden of social injustice. Today's Lasallian Brothers, Sisters, lay members, and community partners continue this work in Australasia and beyond.

The De La Salle order was founded in 17th century France by St John Baptiste de la Salle, a priest who revolutionized education by starting schools for poor boys. Ever since, the Lasallian Institute has offered both human and Christian education to youth often overlooked by society.

The Lasallian mission is borne of a steadfast faith in God and addresses the realities of suffering and inequality in our world. Lasallian values include:

- Faith in the living presence of God
- Concern for social justice and the poor
- Quality education
- Respect for all persons
- Inclusive community

These values are more than just words. Members of the Lasallian Family put their beliefs into action every day. Students and youths served by the Lasallian Institute benefit from these well-rounded values. Thanks to the combined focus on Christian and human education, Lasallian students succeed in and out of the classroom.

[Chelsea Sutton](#), a Year 11 student at De La Salle Cronulla, finished first at the Australian u18 Canoe Marathon Titles and then represented Australia in the World Championships and Masters Canoe Marathon World Championships. "[It's all about the experience](#)," Chelsea says of this opportunity.

Several students of St Michael's College in Adelaide competed on behalf of South Australia in the School Sport Australia National Basketball Championships in Perth. [Ella \(Year 7\)](#), [Zahlia \(Year 10\)](#), and [James \(Year 11\)](#) all participated. James earned the competition's overall MVP Award and was also selected for the All-Australian team.

[Joey Dimou and Alfio Brancato](#), both Year 12 students at St Vincent's College in Ashfield, were honoured at the Youth Partnership's VET Excellence Awards. This award recognizes achievement in Vocational Education and Training. Both students were described as leaders in the classroom and on the job during their industry work

placements. Alfio was recognized for Construction and Joey for her work in Information and Design Technology.

[Alexis Reid](#), a student at La Salle Academy in Lithgow, was invited to a training camp offered by Taiwan's Taichung University. The camp was held at the National Performance Centre for Tae Kwon Do in Melbourne. It was a valuable learning experience for Alexis on her journey to the National Championships.

[Year 6 students](#) from De La Salle College in Malvern pitched a business idea for reducing the amount of plastic waste in landfills. Their concept involved creating fabric from recycled materials instead of throwing it away. The students won the competition after presenting their pitch and answering a battery of questions.

[Sasha Rances](#), a Year 12 student at Casimir Catholic College Marrickville, and [Isabelle Weeden](#) of LaSalle Catholic College were recently awarded the Lasallian's Archbishop of Sydney Award for Student Excellence. The Archbishop presided over ceremonies in each student's honour and presented their awards in person. As Isabelle describes it, her ceremony was "[a spiritually enriching experience that served as a reminder of the profound significance of faith and service in our lives.](#)"

[Michael Kaye](#), who is a Year 12 student and the College photographer at La Salle College in Middle Swan, won a photography award at the City of Swan Ellenbrook Art Exhibition. His award-winning photo showed a plane flying before towering bushfire smoke. Though the fire was a serious and "scary" event, Michael also says his photo "[represents the City of Swan community's endurance during difficult times.](#)"

[Lucas Dawes](#), a Year 8 student at De La Salle College Revesby Heights, won a medal in every event he entered at the Australian All Schools Diving Championships. He claimed silver medals in the Team Synchronised Group One, 14 Years Boy Springboard, 13-14 Years Boys Platform, and 13-14 Boys & Mixed Synchronised. Lucas also took home the Australian Gold Medal in the 14 Years Boys Knockout.

[Poppy Martin](#), a student at John Paul College in Rotorua, placed second in the U20 Women's 5km Run at the New Zealand Road Racing Championships. She ran an 18:31 race which was hotly contested since the three fastest competitors crossed the finish line only milliseconds apart. As Poppy's father Grant says, "[Efforts outside of the school sports calendar deserve recognition, too!](#)"

[Ihita Nath](#), a Year 11 student at John Paul College Rotorua, received the Michael Pillar Memorial Fund Scholarship for achievements in Piano and Theory of Music. This award recognizes students like Ihita who are passionate about their classical musical education.

[Lachlan Doheny](#), a graduate of Oakhill College in Castle Hill, earned a place on the Australian Rugby Schools U18s team. He views making the team as something he did

in honour of Andrew, a previous coach and mentor.

These students clearly show the power of the Lasallian education mission. De La Salle schools provide comprehensive Christian education to give students a firm foundation for the rest of their lives.

However, the Lasallian mission also recognizes the need for human education. A thorough education is one of the most valuable tools against poverty and social injustice. De La Salle students are encouraged to make the most of their gifts so they may bring awareness to causes, promote the Lasallian mission, and uplift others.

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