



DEFYING THE ODDS

My name is Dylan Chow, and I survived the revered and feared journey as a VCE Year 12 student. 2013 brought forth challenges that were both anticipated and unforeseen. The workload was undeniable - anyone will tell you this - and there were difficulties that really tested me not just as a Year 12 student but also as a human being. Salesian College's school motto is "Omnia Omnibus" meaning, "All things to all men", yet for many years, this phrase didn't have much relevance to me. Like most adolescent boys, my priority was to enjoy the company of my mates and introspection was rare. Then halfway through Year 12, my mother was diagnosed with cancer and had to leave the country for treatment abroad. Finding myself without parental guidance forced me to reconsider my priorities, not just educationally but also for survival. Suddenly, the stress of VCE coupled with an unwell mother became unbearable. At one point my grades were slipping but I didn't seem to care. It was difficult to deal with future ambitions of an ATAR and prospects of university when the present was so troubling. At times I doubted myself, and initially thought coping independently and in secrecy was the right thing to do.

I soon realised, however, that allowing people to help me was the most important thing I could do, and that message resonated with me for the rest of the year. The support I received from our school was rewarding. I knew that there were many people I could count on, and I knew that I definitely was not alone. I was a member of the Salesian College Chadstone community and was empowered to achieve my goals. Only in my wildest imaginings could I have seen myself achieving a 90+ ATAR. But it happened! Despite everyone having their own unique predicaments and ambitions, every Year 12 has some kind of uphill climb before their summit is reached. For me, the future is ambiguous, but I'm certain I'll be someone who brings positivity and proclaims wellbeing. Whether

it's in education or psychology, that is the dream I dare to achieve. "Omnia Omnibus" - I want to be all things to all people. Year 12 is the most amazing year of secondary schooling. You're tested, but ultimately if you dare to dream, what you achieve will surprise you. When things get tough, hang in there - don't stop trying and share the load of stress. You may find help in the most peculiar of places and your comrades will be there right beside you. Things don't necessarily get easier; it is just that we get stronger.



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- Dylan Chow, Class of 2013

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