

## **PESA Annual General Meeting 17 March 2017 Election of Directors – Candidate Statements**

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In anticipation of the upcoming AGM, the following statements have been provided by each of the Director candidates in support of their nominations. They are listed in alphabetical order below.

**Please note that voting is restricted to financial, Individual Members of PESA only.**

### **LEONIE ABBOTT, BEd, GCert BusAdmin, MAppPosPsych Senior Trainer Education, Berry Street Childhood Institute, VIC**

Positive Education bolsters the learning of all students. Our field must continue to harness wellbeing strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable and resistant students. I am a senior trainer, co-author and editor of the Berry Street Education Model. Across Australia, I currently support a diverse range of schools with Positive Education training, curriculum and strategies to enable school leaders to embed and sustain the science of wellbeing across a whole-school approach. I am a foundation graduate of the Master of Applied Positive Psychology from the University of Melbourne and have over 20 years of education leadership experience. Previously, I was senior advisor at Independent Schools Victoria. I integrate trauma-informed pedagogy and the science of wellbeing in my interactions with communities. I believe Positive Psychology is a powerful road map for continuous growth.

#### **CV - Background Information:**

January 2015 – Current Berry Street Childhood Institute – Senior Trainer (Berry Street Education Model)  
January 2014 – Current Catching Smiles – Founder (contract work including KidsMatter 3 month training role)  
July 2010 – December 2013 – Independent Schools Victoria – Senior Advisor, National Partnerships  
July 2006 – June 2010 – Methodist Ladies' College – Executive Manager, MLC Parents' Association  
July 2005 – June 2006 – Esource – Consultant  
July 1998 – June 2005 – Methodist Ladies' College – various teaching, leadership positions, finally Year Level Coordinator and Deputy Head Middle School

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### **JOANNE ALFORD, MAPP Deputy Principal of Wellbeing, Saint Francis Xavier College, VIC**

It is with the greatest appreciation that I take this opportunity to introduce myself as a candidate for the position of Directorship of PESA. I come to you as a student of positive psychology, having completed my Masters in Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne and as a practitioner of positive psychology as the Deputy Principal of Wellbeing at Saint Francis Xavier college, Victoria's largest Catholic college of nearly three thousand students and three hundred staff. These qualifications are embodiments of a profound passion I have for the flourishing of both the students and the staff that I am honoured to consider my peers. As an employee of a Catholic school I have grown a unique perspective of just how significant empirically evidenced positive psychology interventions can be as both a wellbeing experience and a faith experience and the link between these unique experiences. It is my hope to offer this perspective as well as my academic and practical experience in wellbeing practices such as; the implementation of wellbeing measure across the college, teacher and support staff training, parent presentations on resilience, developing wellbeing curriculums to the existing practices of PESA.

This year I am presenting at the PESA conference and am much delighted to be attending the IPPA conference in July. In these ways, I am committed to positive education within schools and look to share what I can generously with individual schools or organisations in an effort to advocate positive education across all educational settings.

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### **STEVEN BOWERS, DipTeach, BEd, MEd Admin**

**Principal, Burgmann Anglican School, ACT**

**Current PESA Director**

**(Previously Head of Preparatory, Shore School, 1989 -2009 Term 1)**

Burgmann Anglican School has a heart for Positive Psychology by aiming to engage students across the school to focus on that which is achievable and optimistic, especially in terms of individual and group behaviours. Our well-being programs work with students to build resilience to assist in the management of difficulties.

Burgmann's Wellbeing Model is about celebrating deserved successes both at an individual and group level. Through this framework we are encouraging a 'growth mindset' where students are encouraged to build on successes and failures. Last year, Mrs Melanie Spencer was appointed Deputy Principal – Wellbeing, with the focus of ensuring students are nurtured with high expectations and appropriate consequence and to ensure our Wellbeing Model is articulated appropriately throughout the entire school.

I am fortunate to be a founding member of the National Board of the Positive Education Schools Association (PESA). My involvement on the PESA Board enables me to contribute to, and for Burgmann Anglican School to benefit from, the wealth of knowledge and development of ideas and programs that will enhance Positive Education and wellbeing within our schools. I hope to continue to serve as a Director on the PESA Board as we progress this important work.

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### **SCOTT DONOHOE**

**Principal, San Clemente High School, NSW**

I joined San Clemente (Newcastle, NSW) in 2012 as Assistant Principal (Well-being) and was appointed as Principal in 2016. Prior to this, I was Head of Stage 5 Boarding at Knox Grammar School, Housemaster of a Senior Girls' Boarding House at Aiglon College in Switzerland, and I spent 8 years at St Joseph's College Hunters Hill of which I was also Head of Year 10 Boarding. My qualifications include a Bachelor of Secondary Education (Human Movement & Health Ed, Masters (Leadership & Management in Education) & Graduate Certificate in Theology (specialising in Religious Education).

San Clemente High School is a Catholic co-educational school of around 740 students in Newcastle, Australia. The school's socio-economic status is one of the lowest in the diocese. In addition to the economic challenges faced by families of students attending the school, the student population comprises some 38 different cultures. Many students also rely on the school for much needed mental health and wellbeing support. San Clemente is now recognised as a leader in Positive Education within the region. The school has presented at conferences in Perth and Melbourne, as well as locally to the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) and associated schools in the diocese. The school has been particularly successful in building a positive community, including not only staff and students, but also parents and carers.

In 2015, I initiated and lead whole school change in Positive Education. Knox Grammar School has played an integral role in supporting San Clemente in their Positive Education journey. I have facilitated extensive staff training, developing a close partnership with critical friend, Dr Steve Zolezzi. Steve Zolezzi was formerly at Knox Grammar and also represented PESA as a Director. San Clemente's culture amongst students in the past has been one of surviving, not thriving. With new drive to support the wellbeing of their students and create a new school-wide culture, San Clemente implemented its Positive Education initiative, 'PosED@SCM' (the M standing for the suburb of Mayfield), drawing on a variety of proven Positive Psychology tools and building on the NEF, or Five Ways to Wellbeing model. This model was chosen by staff at training days in late 2014.

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San Clemente has a tremendous opportunity in the diocese to lead and promote the science of wellbeing and positive psychology. There have already been other schools express interest in San Clemente's approach to Positive Education. I feel that I am well placed, within the Maitland-Newcastle diocese, to advocate the benefits of Positive Education for communities. I am also geographically situated in the Hunter region and thus in a good position to support PESA's current initiative in this area.

Thank you for considering my nomination and I look forward to hopefully having an opportunity to contribute to PESA's mission, vision and goals as a Director.

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### **ANNE JOHNSTONE**

**Principal, Ravenswood School for Girls, NSW  
Current PESA Director**

Anne Johnstone is a founding Board member of PESA, and has actively been involved in PESA since 2012.

Anne is currently Principal of Ravenswood School for Girls, a leading independent girls' school in Sydney, where she has helped lead the implementation of Positive Psychology in wellbeing and educational approaches. Anne also previously led the implementation of Positive Education at St Catherine's School in Waverley, NSW and at Seymour College in Adelaide, S.A.

Anne began her career as a lawyer and practised in commercial litigation for four years before she experienced a strong calling to become a teacher. She is passionate about helping students flourish in all aspects of their lives and fulfil their potential.

Her journey in the field of Positive Psychology began in 2004 when she was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to study how to help students become more resilient. While her research was based predominately at Cambridge University, during this time she also attended the 2nd European Conference on Positive Psychology.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degree with honours, and a Graduate Diploma of Education. She is currently undertaking the Masters of Applied Positive Psychology program at University of Pennsylvania.