



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS – OPENING SCHOOL ASSEMBLY

I'm pleased to have our entire school together to celebrate the beginning of this academic year, and to welcome new staff and students that have joined us over the holidays here at Merici College.

A special welcome to the Year 7s who start their journey of being a high school student. And to the new students who have joined Merici into Years 8-11 – welcome and I hope you feel excited about your arrival.

I hope you have had a relaxing and rejuvenating summer holiday break. School has arrived, and with it, new dreams to achieve and new horizons to explore.

Australia has had a tough start to this year, along with other places all over the world. As a country we have learnt that to be caring is an important trait and shows great strength of character. We have seen people in our community show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. And we have also seen some of our leaders not put this into action like we thought they should. As a community now, we have a commitment to serve and act and make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

We have also learnt that sometimes what we read or hear on the news or social media isn't always true. It is at times like these that we have to be reflective. Being reflective is another one of the IB Learner Profile traits. Reflection allows us to reassess what has happened and what we have learned, and to analyze events, emotions, and thoughts. It allows us to ponder and to question. And ensure we use our knowledge to discern the fake from the true.

With all the fires, smoke, hail and heat, our family spent a lot of time in doors. Netflix Christmas movies got a bit boring and so we took the plunge into Disney Plus. And I realised I had never watched a Marvel movie. I decided I had to make up for lost time and over the month of January I am embarrassed but also proud to admit that I have now completed the 22 movies in the Marvel Cinematic Universe series. So not wanting to put this viewing time to waste I decided to consider what lessons we could draw from the Marvel Characters to our theme of Building Futures. Although they may look like a bunch of strange egotistical characters in strange costumes, there are valuable lessons to be learned.

I can't go through every character so I have chosen my favourite four:

- Ironman/Tony Stark – super start, he learns from his failures and makes the necessary adjustments to keep improving his suits. He is willing to add new skills and abilities to his list of strengths and is always there helping others.

- The Hulk/Bruce Banner – a genius, he teaches us to accept ourselves: all our faults and failings and to look at them from a different angle. So they become part of a solution and not the problem. He teaches us that this takes time to accept.
- Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow – an amazing human running around with superheroes and the God of Thunder! Relying on her skill and wit, sometimes even outsmarting the heroes. She is an essential member of the team and has been flexible in reapplying her spy skills to defeat the strongest of enemies. She also shows that whilst your past can be negative, you have the power to change the direction. I am looking forward to her movie being release later this year.
- Captain Marvel – first of all, it is important to note that her movie was released on IWD 2019. She stood up to bullies and made sure she stood by her friendship and was good judge of character. She learnt, the hard way, to be careful around manipulative people – so it good those to build you up with those who can bring you down.

You see, every person has unique strengths they can express which will help them take up a place in a team or community. We can't build futures more wondrous that we dare to dream unless we make sure that what we are creating is based on strong values and foundations. Values like, faith, hope love, compassion and strength. All values found on the bricks on the image on the front page of your school planner this year.

In the last Avenger Movie: End Game. Each character and superhero finally works out that they have to work together in order to defeat sin and evil.

They have to accept each other: human, superhumans, superheroes, princes and aliens. They realise they have to put aside their own selfish pride and we are the same – for as the saying goes: united we stand, divide we fall.

It is normal to have conflict with each other. We don't always have to see eye to eye, because we are human and arguments happen. They learnt about trust. They couldn't do everything on their own. They needed each other. They had to be honest, communicate about their feelings and accept each other (even the faults). It was important for them to know when to listen, when to be reflective, to apologise and move on with compassion and humility. Only when they did this could they work together as the Avenger family and be a team destined to save the world.



This quote from Serena Williams, the great tennis player is a wonderful mantra, I will give you a few moments to read it quietly.

In Conclusion, I wish you all the best for 2020.

Build your future on a strong foundation.

Be a proud Merici College Student.

Be a super hero if you want.

But really... just be yourself, striving to reach one goal at a time.

Celebrating along the way. Rising up to do good things for others.

Listen with Love Learn with Hope Live with Faith

And in line with our theme keep #buildingfutures

Mrs Loretta Wholley

Principal

The success of **every woman** should be the inspiration to another. **We should raise each other up.**

Make sure you're very courageous: be **strong**, be extremely **kind**, and above all be **humble**.

SERENA WILLIAMS

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