

December 2021

This edition of the *Parent Perspectives* newsletter contains submissions from our Australian affiliate. Included is a fascinating testimonial from Australian Alumni Katherine Tsingos, and in our new section titled “Cultural Corner” we share some interesting facts about Australia that may surprise you! Please enjoy!

## The Value of FPS!

What is the value that I've gained from FPS? A question that I am constantly asked - in job interviews, university applications, and by students looking to commence the Future Problem Solving program. I always come to the same answer: **this program not only created some of my most memorable high school experiences but has also impacted the way I look at our future.**

I started FPS in year eight at Kambala as a Global Issues Problem Solving team competitor, where we were presented with the task of addressing the most challenging future scenarios. Through the FPS program, I became much more critical and inquisitive about world issues and developed the collaborative thinking skills that are increasingly important for today's careers.

In FPS, our imaginations were our only limit. Some of our ideas were outrageously creative, such as creating a massive dome that transported people away from natural disasters. Yes, this very unrealistic solution was inspired by Captain America: The Winter Soldier. However, it was so much

fun and made me consider the impact of natural disasters on populations worldwide. These scenarios showed us the perspectives of real people whose lives had been affected. Though we may never implement a Captain America-like flying vessel onto every land surface to protect those from natural disasters, this process definitely unleashed my creative thinking abilities.

Topics that presented seemingly far off realities, such as "The Spread of Infectious Diseases", are now more prevalent than ever.



*FPS Students - Kambala NSW circa 2018*



*Kambala Students at the 2019 International Conference, Massachusetts, USA*

FPS has even allowed me to meet new people all over the world. With the support of my fantastic coach Anna Messariti, I travelled around Australia for the 2017 and 2018 National Finals and even competed in the 2019 International competition in Massachusetts. As a result, I've met and stayed in touch with new friends from all around the world!

My experience with FPS certainly didn't stop after high school. I now coach four teams and evaluate for FPS Australia, along with my fellow teammate and coach Alice Duthie. FPS teaches *you how to think, not what to think*, which is an incredibly invaluable life skill. To students considering participating in FPS, I couldn't recommend the program enough.

Katherine Tsingos

## Cultural Corner – Australia



### There are three official flags in Australia

*Australian Aboriginal Flag.*



Black – represents the Aboriginal people of Australia.

Yellow circle – represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector.

Red – represents the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and Aboriginal peoples' spiritual relation to the land

*The Australian National flag.*



The Union Jack in the upper left corner represents the history of British settlement.

Below the Union Jack is a white Commonwealth, or Federation, star. It has seven points representing the unity of the six states and the territories of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Southern Cross is shown on the flag in white. It is a constellation of five stars that can only be seen from the southern hemisphere

*The Torres Strait Islander flag.*



Green – represents the land

Black – represents the Indigenous peoples

Blue - represents the sea

White – represents peace. It depicts a white Dhari (traditional headdress) with a five-pointed white star beneath it. The star represents the five island groups within the Torres Strait

## Interesting facts about Australia that may surprise you

90% of Australians live on the coast

Tasmania has the cleanest air in the world

Australia was the second country in the world to give women the right to vote in 1902

The Great Barrier Reef, Queensland is the largest eco-system in the world

Australia is the only continent in the world without an active volcano.

The Australian school year runs from February to December. The school year is divided into 4 terms with a two week break between the terms. The summer holidays which start in December are six – eight weeks long.

The Australian Alps get more snow than the Swiss Alps

49% of Australians were born overseas or have at least one parent who was born overseas and moved to Australia

Australia is home to the longest fence in the world. Originally built to keep dingo's away from fertile land, the fence is now 5,614 km long.

99% of Australian students (K-12) wear a uniform to school

80% of the animals are unique to Australia

Uluru (Ayers Rock) is known as the largest monolith in the world and is over 8km wide at its widest point. 2.5 km of Uluru is underground



*Uluru, Australia*

We are so fortunate to have so many cultures, countries, and customs represented in our FPSPi family! Whatever your faith, customs, beliefs, or traditions, it is our fervent hope that you and yours are happy, healthy, and able to enjoy the 2021 holiday season while we ALL look forward to an even better 2022!

Thank you to each family for your continued participation, support, and for sharing your delightful children with us!

