

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

JOSH WHITTAKER

CLASS OF 2006

When did you attend Lowanna College?

I began in 2001 and I graduated in 2006.

What were your memories of Lowanna College?

Close to home, a place where I felt safe, had a lot of fun and learnt a lot of good lessons (as any school kid does reflecting back after 10+ years).

How do you think your experiences at Lowanna College helped you become the person you are today?

Whether teachers realise it or not, they can have a profound and lasting effect on individuals (both positively and negatively). Fortunately for me I had a couple of teachers who I gelled well with, who put a lot of time and interest into my development and I felt like I could go away and achieve what I wanted. I also felt like there were multiple pathways to do that.

Was there anyone at Lowanna College who had a positive impact and upon reflection, influenced you to follow the path you have chosen?

I always enjoyed sport and still remember all of my PE teachers (Mr. Cox, Mr. Bailey and Mr. Brisbane) throughout school having a positive influence on me. Further, and perhaps more academically, I appreciated the extra work put in by my Specialist Maths teacher (Mrs. Pickett) who spent lunchtimes and holidays ensuring we were up to speed, as well as Mr. Gray, my Physics teacher, who cared more than what he probably had to! So whilst not following a certain career path by either of those two mentioned teachers, it gave me a sense of importance and taught me values around putting in the work to get where I wanted to go.



What did you do after leaving Lowanna College, and where are you now?

Loving sport, I completed a Bachelor of Human Movement at RMIT, thinking that I wanted to train elite athletes. I then thought I wanted to lecture so I went down a research pathway through RMIT. And then finally, I realised I wanted to be in the Gippsland area, so I completed a Masters in Clinical Exercise Physiology at Deakin University, and in the last 4-5 years have worked in exercise rehabilitation and chronic disease management across a number of GP clinics and private practices across Gippsland.

I kept the lecturing dream alive and do that casually with Federation University. And most recently I have launched my own allied health business (Hex Health) in Traralgon, where we have a number of services that use exercise, diet and manual therapies to help people with their health, injuries or chronic diseases.

What are your greatest accomplishments (list any awards, achievements, defining moments etc.)?

A little cliché - but my kids. I understand and know what's important in my life and they are atop of that list. There is no real award or recognition that I have received but some of the highlights of my work recently include:

- training GP registrar's on 'how to get their patients to change behaviour';
- lecturing young adults that go on to further employment;
- opening a business in the Valley where myself and other allied health staff can do meaningful work and have an income;
- numerous corporate health speaking positions on exercise, weightloss, back health and how to change habits;
- And on an case by case level, helping a lot of people with their health and injuries get back to doing the things they want to do with their life.



What advice would you like to give any of our current Lowanna College students?

Immerse yourself in as many opportunities you can until you figure out what you want to do. If you know what you want to do - speak to those that are doing it, to better understand the work and your pathway (and do that fast!!). Have that goal, work tirelessly towards it and be flexible knowing that it'll likely change as you do.

Other key points would be:

- Ask for help. There are people out there to thrust you forward.
- Network and be kind to others. Being a 'good person' to everyone always pays off - and that means, give without expecting anything in return or asking 'what's in it for me?'
- And finally, take complete ownership of your direction and **PUT IN THE WORK**. We all want certain things, but seldom do we want to put in the work associated with it! Highly likely you can have what you want, but you're probably standing in your own way from getting there.

Anything else you'd like to include?

Enjoy everything school has to offer!

