Kids Teaching Kids

In 2010 Merici students in Years 9 and 10 were offered a Sustainability Elective to commence at the start of 2011. In this elective students explore their attitudes, expand their knowledge about sustainability issues and apply learned skills within their family and school community. Students experience a hands-on approach through the design and continual development of Merici’s new vegetable garden, develop an understanding of energy and water efficiency, carbon footprints, horticulture and biodiversity and have a significant input into Merici’s sustainable future.

Recently the Sustainability students presented a management plan to the Merici Executive and staff members. The focus of the management plan was on the establishment of the school’s kitchen and indigenous gardens and community education that encompasses the College, as well as forming networks with other schools. Students spoke about establishing an orchard, ways to improve soil, composting, consultation with local aboriginal people to identify plants, and the importance of engaging the community.

The students have also been involved in “Kids Teaching Kids” which is a school based learning model that uses local environment issues as a theme for learning. Kids Teaching Kids is led by two national identities, Arron and Richard Wood. The Kids Teaching Kids Learning Model and Program starts in the classroom and extends into the community with more than 35,000 students in schools around Australia involved.

On Monday 29 August 2011, Merici Sustainability students had an opportunity to share their management plan with students from a range of Canberra and Queanbeyan schools at a Kids Teaching Kids Workshop. The workshop was held so that students could share information, learn from each other’s sustainability projects and build connections between environment groups.

Trish McEwan, Merici College Sustainability Officer has commented on the importance of participating in the conference. “This is a great achievement for the students as they will prepare workshops and present to their peers. The conference is about protecting and enhancing our natural environment and community through education within the school environment and involvement with the community.

In addition the students have been invited to participate in the 2011 International Kids Teaching Kids River Conference which will be held in Adelaide from 23 to 25 October 2011. This will be an opportunity for our students to meet with other students from across Australia and from overseas to broaden their understanding of the environmental issues effecting other communities and sharing the challenges we also face in ours.

All these steps are helping Merici College to build a better future for their students, community and environment.

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