

Subject: Commonwealth Games athlete reflects on teaching at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Bundaberg

Date: 27 July 2022

Australian Women's Discus Champion and three-time Commonwealth Games representative, Taryn Gollshewsky, says her work as a Physical Education teacher at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Bundaberg, helps keep balance in her life and offers mental rest from the rigours and stress of competition at the highest level.

Speaking from her hometown of Bundaberg on the eve of her departure for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in England, Taryn shed light on juggling a part-time teaching career and top-level sporting competition.

"It is very difficult. On work days, I wake up at 4.30am so I can go to the gym before work and I often train after work too. It is a very tiring schedule.

"However, I love my job and the mental reprieve it provides. For 6 hours a day I work with enthusiastic young people who require my attention, so I'm not thinking about training, technique, or any sport related stresses.

"I'm not like most elite athletes who live and breathe their sport 24 hours a day. I love the balance working gives my life. I think work makes me a better athlete," Taryn said.

Taryn commenced teaching at St Patrick's in 2017 and paid tribute to her school community for their support and encouragement.

"My school is amazing! They sang me the Irish Blessing today and gave me a coin to take with me on my travels. I've had every single student wishing me good luck all week. They are amazing, I am so uplifted from their support," Taryn said.

Support for Taryn echoed throughout Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton according to Director Leesa Jeffcoat.

"All of us in Catholic Education are thrilled for Taryn as she competes in her third Commonwealth Games. We wish her every success and blessing and we will be cheering her on every time she steps to the plate," Miss Jeffcoat said.

"Taryn's journey is remarkable and her determination in the face of adversity is inspirational. Miss G, as she is fondly known, is a highly valued staff member at St Patrick's," Miss Jeffcoat said.

.../cont

Facing a major setback through a significant injury last year, Taryn has proven nothing is impossible, fighting to return to competition and for a place on the Australian Commonwealth Games team.

“I still have some physical limitations and pain, however my leg is improving every day. It is surreal to be back competing for Australia just 14 months after breaking my leg. I certainly did not think I would be back this soon,” Taryn said.

Resilience and perseverance were values Taryn hoped to inspire in her students at St Patrick’s.

“Many students give up easily if something is difficult, so I talk to my students about practicing and training and how repetition is required to achieve a goal.

“It’s wonderful to see when their hard work is rewarded,” Taryn said.

Taryn’s inspiration to take up a career in teaching was sparked by her mother’s long time role working in a school and her own experience as a teacher aide.

“My mum worked in a school for 23 years as an Administration Officer, Business Services Manager and teacher aide. When I was doing my first degree at University, a Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science, I worked as a teacher aide. I loved it and decided to complete my Master of Teaching (Primary).

“I love the role I play in my students’ lives and helping them to become the best people they can be,” Taryn said.

Taryn is scheduled to compete in the second session of competition on Day 6 of the Games (2 August).

ENDS

For further information contact Maria Greene, Communications Officer, Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton 0448985034/49948056.