

HD CLASS ACTS  
BY OCTAVIA GOLD and ARIKI TABELI Upper Coomera State College  
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OCTAVIA GOLD and ARIKI TABELI Upper Coomera State College This Samoan adventure drew together many Gold Coast students for a life-changing experience to help others

WHAT began as a leadership program resulted in a life-changing experience that provided an insight into a whole new world. Northern Collegiate is comprised of students from several Gold Coast schools, including: Coombabah State High, Helensvale State High, Pacific Pines State High, Pimpama State Secondary College and Upper Coomera State College.

In 2016 we were privileged to be a part of this program, where we met a group of determined, kind and intelligent students and teachers. After a three-day camp we formed a strong bond; a group that would eventually lead us to join an everlasting legacy of Project Samoa.

Project Samoa started in 2012 to help orphan girls affected by abuse and neglect, as well as the crisis of a cyclone and tsunami that had devastated Samoa. We decided to help the children by creating a brand new classroom inside the orphanage.

With the Northern Collegiate students fundraising over \$40,000 we were able to successfully raise the funds to construct the classroom. Our fundraising entailed many sausage sizzles, trivia nights, movie nights and the selling of chocolate boxes.

We worked together in coherence with the Surfers Paradise Sunrise Rotary Club, who built the classroom that would then be shipped overseas.

On September 17 this year we departed Australia and our journey began. While in Samoa we were able to experience a variety of cultural activities and assisted Rotary in the construction of the classroom in Apia Samoa. The build took two weeks and in this time we were then able to interact and play with the children. Hearing their stories and seeing how happy they were allowed us to gain a new perspective and enabled us to see the small difference we made to their lives by providing a new educational facility with the equipment and tools they need to further grow. This was definitely a trip of a lifetime, one we'll never forget.



Front row (from left): Ariki Tabei, Gabi Cooper, Tyla Macdonald, Kimberley Wong, Sheridan Best, Yuanyan Teng, Casey-Lee Beck, Octavia Gold, Mae Hillson-Taylor and (back row): Nathan Gobbs, Nahdia Graham, Rachel Best, Kyle Gurney, Ashley Hinds and Tai Aloalo gather at the Immaculate Conception of Mary Cathedral, Main Beach Rd, Apia.

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Gabi Cooper, Kimberley Wong and Yuanyan Teng hard at work.

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L-R: Kyle Gurney, Ariki Tabei, Octavia Gold, Rachel Best

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Front: Mae Hillson-Taylor, Yuanyan Teng, Tyla Macdonald, Sheridan Best, Stella de Groot and (back): Kimberley Wong, Gabi Cooper, Nahdia Graham, Simon Canuana, Hudson Sirovs, Octavia Gold and (still working): Doug Lipp, Ashley Hinds.