

WILEY PARK GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL'S "IFTAR" DINNER HAILED A GREAT SUCCESS!

Many Greek background staff at the school, spearheaded by Deputy Principal Ms Despina Agapitos, coordinated this very important event for the school community!

Report by Dimitrios Kametopoulos

Wiley Park Girls High School is a local comprehensive high school for girls that is located in Sydney' southwest, between the very multicultural suburbs of Punchbowl and Lakemba, on the corner of The Boulevard and King Georges rd. Wiley Park train station, on the Bankstown line, is right opposite the school and the Greek Community Club of Sydney and NSW is only approximately 1 kilometre away from the school!

With its location in the heart of Sydney's multiculturalism, the teaching and administration staff of Wiley Park Girls High School show immense respect to their students and their families, to the local businesses and, in general, to the local community and its residents.

On Tuesday 4 May 2021, after the turbulent year of the pandemic of 2020, the Greek background staff led by the school's Deputy Principal, Ms Despina (Debbie) Agapitos, as well as other staff organised the annual "Iftar" dinner for the Muslim community in the presence of the municipal authorities, of business people as well as executive and teaching colleagues from surrounding schools, e.g. from Bankstown Girls High School, Punchbowl Boys High School, Kingsgrove North High School, Bankstown Senior College Intensive English Centre and others. This event took place just after the sunset in the school's large Hall.

The "Iftar" is dinner for the Muslim people is the food enjoyed after a long day of food and drink abstinence during the Holy month of Ramadan. During this period, it is customary to wish one another "Ramadan Mubarak!" and "Ramadan Kareem!" which basically mean "May Ramadam be blessed" and "May Ramadam be generous" respectively. Making these wishes is similar to Christians - Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox- all over the world wishing one another, during the period of Lent, "Happy Easter!" or as we say in Greek «Καλό Πάσχα!».

The M.C. of the evening was the Deputy Principal, Ms Agapitos who welcomed everyone to the school, noting that it was "fabulous" being able to reconnect with one another after such a disruptive year. Even though the number of guests was capped compared to last year, Ms Agapitos said that this was a great gathering as it still had "key" people from the local community. The attendees were also welcomed by the newly appointed Principal of the school, Ms Kim Osbourne. In her speech, Ms



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Osbourne said she wanted to serve all the students of her school, irrespective of religions and ethnic backgrounds and she was looking forward to contributing to the community in her new role. Immediately after, the local sheikh spoke about the importance of Ramadan for Muslim people, highlighting that this period is about self-constraint, being self-disciplined as well as helping others who are in need.

The food was plentiful and everyone enjoyed a marvellous evening. Many of the teaching and non-teaching staff of Wiley Park Girls High School participated in the event with many students who were wearing their characteristic green coloured uniform.

A big congratulations is owed to Ms Despina Agapitos for her tireless efforts over the years to ensure that the school's local community is respected in multiple ways and that it is connected

with education in general. Other staff, Greek and non-Greek background, who contributed in many ways to the success of the evening included Ms Mary Tran and Ms Dezi Tsalabas, both who managed the event from invitations to table setting turning the hall into a beautiful space to share a meal, Ms Dimitra Saisanas and the very active Student Representative Council who welcomed guests and represented the school with pride as well as Ms Meegan McEwan, Ms Kate Brennan, Mr Andrew McDonald and Ms Najah Diyab who supported with many administration tasks. This great event was and is about the dedication, effort and collaboration of many people who make our community and society a better and respectful place-Wiley Park Girls High School is certainly no exception to all these values, demonstrating them daily through classes at school and regularly through various school events!