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CHOOSEMATHS comes to La Trobe

Authored by Katherine Seaton 13 Jun 2018 ★ [My Favourite \(https://intranet.latrobe.edu.au/my-favourites\)](https://intranet.latrobe.edu.au/my-favourites)

100 female students from Years 9 and 10, five local schools, seven teachers, three guest speakers, four workshops, three student panel members, two hosts and dozens of pieces of ZomeTool all added up to a fantastic **CHOOSEMATHS** Day at the Bundoora campus last week.

The day was presented by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics in conjunction with the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI) of which La Trobe is a full member. The schools attending the event were Viewbank College, St Helena Secondary College, Lalor North College, Mercy College Coburg and The Academy of Mary Immaculate.

CHOOSEMATHS is a 5 year program to turn around community attitudes to participation in mathematics along the pipeline from school to university and on to rewarding careers, particularly for girls and young women. We were delighted to be invited to be one of the handful of universities from around Australia invited to hold a **CHOOSEMATHS** Day in 2018.

FEEDBACK



While the workshops were hands-on and very different from a lesson from a maths text book or an online resource, it was the quality of the La Trobe speakers and panel members that stood out to the AMSI host, Dr Julia Collins. These included statistics lecturer Dr Natalie Karavarsamis (pictured) who has previously worked for the Cancer Council and DPI, Charles Gray (Ph. D. student and AMSI **CHOOSEMATHS** ambassador) and current students in La Trobe bachelor and master programs, including Data Science. These women spoke honestly about the highs and lows of their studies, and the jobs that choosing maths has opened up for them. The Q&A session was hardly long enough for all the questions that the students had for the panellists, including how they keep going when they get stuck. One of the teachers attending wrote “My girls had a fantastic time, some are already interested, and some needed to hear from your speakers.”

As well as construction with ZomeTool and a workshop featuring colouring, cartoons, games, graphs and number sequences with Assoc. Prof. Katherine Seaton (the La Trobe host), a brisk walk in the winter sunshine to see all the maths on display in the design of the LIMS building gave the students a chance to experience a university campus, many of them for the first time.

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