

29 February 2016.

To whom it may Concern

Nathan Parkers' parents have been acquaintances of mine and my wife since our high school days where we attended Chevalier College, Bowral. Nathan and his brothers are a testament to Anthony and Jo-Ann's parenting skills, personal values and ethics.

It was my honor, to teach Nathan in Religious Education in year nine and from there follow his successes through life. Even in year nine this quiet, unassuming young man was very driven, quietly achieving at the highest standard in all of his assessments and attaining an 'A' for RE.

Over the next three years I watched Nathan grow into a mature well rounded young citizen. It was no surprise to me that Nathan did so well in his HSC because his quiet, mature and focused approach to his studies, assured him of success. I believe It was these personal attributes that saw Nathan join the RAAF to follow his dream to be a fighter pilot. What I did not know till last week was that this dream or goal had been with Nathan since he was six years old.

In 2015, adversity struck Nathan in a bus accident which left him scarred, missing his left forearm and a damaged right hand. Over the past four months I have witnessed this young man's personality and resolve come to the fore, his resilience and good humor has not left him and he has met this hurdle in life with a wondrous attitude which would put most people to shame. I had bumped into Nathan in town a few times and he has always seemed very comfortable in himself with his prosthetic hand and scars, which is a credit to his attitude.

In February, 2016 I had the absolute pleasure of being invited to listen to Nathan speak at Trinity College, about his 'hurdle in life'. Wow, I was blown away. This young man stood in front of forty or so year eight, nine and ten students, he kept them enthralled, engaged, chuckling at times and overall in awe of how this young man has been so resilient in the face of such a devastating accident.

That night I mentioned to my wife that Nathan's life goal had been slowly simmering away since he was six years old. This is the key to his success- he knew what he wanted, never took his eye off the prize and worked hard to achieve it. He worked out that he needed to do very well at school and learn how to fly at a civilian level as a teenager.

I whole heartily endorse and encourage Nathan to spread his story of resilience in the face of adversity to more young men and women in our local society. Nathan not only shared his story but he did it with excellent oral diction, dignity and humor. His courage, honesty and integrity are a compelling combination of personal qualities that are generally rare in young men his age.

I believe that young people everywhere need to hear Nathan's story.

I personally wish Nathan all the best for an amazing future as I know nothing will keep this young man from achieving his dreams.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Col Ferderer.

Teacher Trinity Catholic College, Lismore.