

From the Archives

Joanne Travaglia



If one poses the question “What employment position does this alumni hold?”, the answer is quite complex, involved and exceedingly broad. There is a simple answer – she is Professor of Health Services Management at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Her path to this august position

began with schooling at St Mary’s Primary School, Concord, Rosebank College Five Dock for Years 7 to 10 (1973 – 1976) followed by Years 11 and 12 at St Scholastica’s College, Glebe.

Joanne recalls her years at Rosebank with much contentment; the mercurial Sister Bernadine as Principal, Joan Sinclair as History/Geography teacher, retreats at Vision Valley, the annual picnic at Nielsen Park on the Harbour with its bus convoy for transport. Above all this was the pastoral aspect of Rosebank’s site with its oval and sumptuous gardens.

Joanne’s parents, Carlo and Rosa, were, as for many pupils of the time, immigrants from Italy. Carlo and Rosa lived in Loftus Street, Concord, just to the western side of Concord Oval.

On completing the HSC, Joanne gained admission to Sydney University. She chose a degree in Social Work which involved subjects such as Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology. Joanne always thought that Rosebank’s R.E. courses were an influence and preparation for what was to unfold.

At Sydney University, she completed her Bachelor of Social Studies (Hons) which led her to work as a Community Worker with a special interest in policy writing and working with immigrant groups. Her Honours thesis, “The Garbled Voice” , was one of the first Australian studies into people with disabilities who were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Joanne established and ran, as a self-funding unit, the Cultural Diversity Training Unit at the University of Sydney. This required her to develop and teach the first University-recognized course on diversity training in this country.

To follow this, Joanne completed a Master in Adult Education with the Australian Catholic University. Since her life was becoming so much more involved in educating and training adults, she focused on issues of adult, community and online education and research. Joanne then completed a PhD in medical sociology

at the University of New South Wales on issues of vulnerable groups and patient safety.

She went on to develop, conduct and evaluate training courses for health services across Australia and numerous other public and private organisations. She has also taught similar courses in New Zealand and Italy. Her courses included cross-cultural communication, diversity management, health literacy, teamwork, learning organisations and knowledge creation and transfer. She has developed and taught courses at postgraduate level and been an invited lecturer in Faculties of Medicine, Pharmacy, Social Work, Health Sciences and Law.

In her present position as Professor of Health Services at UTS, Joanne engages in further research into vulnerability in health and social care, including aged and disability services. She teaches courses to UTS students on Health Management with its many challenges. She also supervises PhD candidates both from Australia and internationally. Joanne has published over 100 articles in peer reviewed journals, as well as several books. She has received over \$10 million dollars in research funding over the length of her career.

In the process of researching and teaching about effective high quality and safe health care, Joanne recognised an imperatively basic fact that one method of delivery does not fit all. Diverse cultural, linguistic ability and skills must be taken into account and delivery modified to be effective and efficient. Joanne provides another fine example of an alumni who has built an amazing life career of value and inspiration to so many other people.

Mr Robert Beazley College Archivist

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