

ACU's Frontier program is inspiring the next generation of Catholic leaders

Second year Australian Catholic University (ACU) Canberra Campus Bachelor of Nursing student, Laura Hants, is a walking advertisement for Frontier, the ACU Campus Ministry national volunteer evangelising program.

Laura grew up in Yass and completed high school in Canberra, so the ACT capital was an obvious choice for university.

"I always knew I wanted to be a nurse and this calling grew stronger throughout my high school years," she said.

"I loved the strong sense of community that I experienced at an ACU Open Day, and when I had the opportunity to attend a practical day where I trialled some of the courses. ACU has met all my expectations and the transition to university life was so smooth."

An early offer to attend university through ACU's Community Achiever Program (CAP) led Laura to meet Canberra Campus Ministry Pastoral Associate, Greg Jeffery.

"By the start of Semester 2, I was keen to be involved in some of the events Campus Ministry was offering. Everyone was so welcoming, and I was able to meet many new and wonderful people," Laura said.

A variety of activities is available at each ACU campus. "I was excited to deepen my faith and explore everything Campus Ministry had to offer. This encouraged me to apply for Frontier Silver so I could be more involved in planning events and be a part of a team helping to support students in the community."

The Frontier program operates at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. Frontier students spread the gospel by serving in areas like running faith formation groups, event management, liturgical and music ministry, community engagement and communication and promotion of campus events and opportunities.

Laura explains, "Frontier involves having a strong presence within university life and allows you to support students. You have the opportunity to be involved in events such as Open Day and Orientation to help students transition into university, as well as being a part of the planning process of events such as Connect Groups, Sunset Sessions, retreats and Masses.

"You're supported by having regular meetings with your campus pastoral associate and with a mentor in your field of study. For me, spending time with a graduate nurse who shares my ideals and values has been wonderful.

"Frontier has allowed me to develop my leadership, communication and organisation skills and this has helped me accomplish academic goals. And I've met so many new people who have become friends and broadened my support network."

Laura is a spirited advocate of the Frontier program and recommends it wholeheartedly. She hopes to progress to Frontier Gold, which would allow her to maintain and deepen her involvement in, and commitment to, Campus Ministry.

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