

Devett O'Brien (1999 – 2003)

My name is Devett O'Brien and I'm currently the Secretary-General of the International Young Christian Students movements (IYCS). I am moving to France towards the end of 2011 to take up this role for the next 4 years. The IYCS is a movement with 3 million members world-wide taking action to transform their own lives and the world around them. It is run for students by students themselves, in Australia this is all secondary school students but internationally it involves tertiary students as well.

IYCS runs a global campaign "Fight Poverty; Build Peace" which brings the voice of millions of young people to international bodies such as the UN, the UN Human Rights Commission, and the Vatican.

I went to Jimmies from 1999-2003 and I thought it was a great school. Not that I liked going to school, I hate reading or listening to people who pretend they loved every minute of school. But St James' did give an education that was more grounded in the real world and demonstrated social justice in action simply by how it operated most of the time I was there.

The St James motto of "Faithful Forever" has always stuck with me and I value being faithful to God, to the most marginalized people, and to my own beliefs and values.

When I was there Jimmies had a real mix of people and the School Leadership Team seemed to take our rough working class reputation as a badge of honour. I think this is something that has really influenced me in what I've done since leaving school because it shows a commitment to the same decision that Edmund Rice made right back at the beginning. It's a commitment to choose the side of the marginalized and excluded and give them access to an education that is essential for life in our society. This commitment goes beyond charity to strive for justice and that is a lesson from Jimmies that I will have for life.