16 May 2018

**Former student returns to Immanuel Lutheran College after life-saving organ transplant**

Double lung recipient and former Immanuel Lutheran College student, Renee Falconer, will return to the college tomorrow to share with Year 12 health students about the life-changing impact that organ donation continues to have on her life.

Ms Falconer was born with cystic fibrosis, and after graduating from Immanuel in 2008, she went on to complete a Bachelor degree and marry the love of her life.

At the age of 22 she noticed her health and lung function was starting to decline. By 25, she was too puffed to walk the length of her home or shower by herself and needed full-time care.

In 2015, Ms Falconer finally received the amazing news of a suitable match for a double lung transplant. Her life had been saved by a complete stranger who had the foresight to become an organ donor during their lifetime.

“It’s an amazing and humbling experience; I think about and thank my donor every day”, Ms Falconer said.

From the age of 16 you can now register your donation decision in less than 60 seconds at donatelife.gov.au.

Ms Falconer will be accompanied by Shona McDonald, DonateLife Queensland Donation Specialist Nurse Coordinator for Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service, to answer questions and discuss how important it is for everyone over the age of 16 to make a donation decision and to share that decision with their loved ones.

“Speaking to school students is important, because it’s one of those milestone decisions – one that signifies you are now responsible for your life and even what happens to your body after you die,” Ms McDonald said.

Immanuel Principal Colin Minke said he was grateful that Renee, a courageous and resilient young woman, had chosen to share her story with their students and raise awareness about this very important issue.

“Immanuel was one of the first schools on the Coast to start the conversation about organ donation with young people which is something they wouldn’t normally think about,” he said.

“We are therefore proud to be a part of this important community program.”
Young people are among the most likely to say they support organ donation and would accept an organ transplant if they needed one, but the least likely to have registered or discussed their wishes with their family.

**Media are invited to attend:**
Immanuel Lutheran College – Main Administration Building
Thursday, 17 May 2018 at 2.30pm

**ENDS**

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