



Speech By  
**Jonty Bush**


**MEMBER FOR COOPER**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### The Gap State High School, International Women's Day

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.17 pm): My contribution tonight is to talk up one of the wonderful schools in my electorate. We have 18 schools that the electorate of Cooper hosts or where our families principally attend. In fact, many people move to the area for the wonderful schools that we have.

Tonight I would like to focus on one of those schools: The Gap State High School and its team, from Principal Anne McLauchlan to all of the educators, admin, cleaners, P&C, parents and, of course, the students who give this school the colour and movement that we love so much. I recently spoke to Ms McLauchlan about hosting an International Women's Day event at the school. Of course, one of the first partners to get involved in that was the Broncos, which is a great organisation to work with as a local member. Whenever I need help, whether it is to coordinate a clean-up effort or to speak at a school, the Broncos are always so supportive.

The Broncos coordinated for Ali Briggenshaw to come and speak at our International Women's Day breakfast. Ali's curriculum vitae is absolutely impressive. Ali grew up in a rugby family and played from a young age but faced a lot of adversity, including being told repeatedly that, despite going through a meritorious process, clubs felt they could not give her a spot on a team because there was not a career path for women in rugby and, because there was no women's rugby, it would not be fair for her to take a position from a boy who could go on to have a career. Fortunately, neither she nor her parents took this advice and Ali ended up being named as one of the five marquee players for the Brisbane Broncos NRL women's premiership team in 2018, and, in fact, was named captain of the side.

Ali has gone on to have such a stellar career with the Broncos since, and to have her speak to the young girls and women about defying expectations, following your passion and giving yourself permission to take up that space was really important. She had three points of wisdom she shared with us that have gotten her through her career, and I hope she does not mind if I share them with everyone here tonight. They were: be on time, wear your uniform and thank your teacher or coach. They are really simple messages but, as she said, it is about demonstrating the value of respect, and she has carried that with her throughout her career.

We also heard Irene Mengel speak. Irene is a young woman in her twenties who has the beautiful duality of being a lawyer by day while after-hours she co-manages the Aspire Gallery in Red Hill. Irene spoke to the audience about her role in challenging perceptions of what young women in business can do and the importance of mentors and role models for young women in navigating that tricky commercial space. I feel really blessed to be in a community that puts such a high value on supporting women to reach their fullest potential. I would like to place on record my thanks to Ali and Irene and the The Gap State High School for a fantastic initiative. We had about 150 people turn up for breakfast for the inaugural event, and I very much look forward to hosting it every year from now on.