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**WELCOME TO
YNEWS
3RD EDITION 2016**

Welcome to the latest edition of YNews! Here, we celebrate a range of achievements and events, including the release of our 2015-16 Annual Report, and Election Scorecard.

We also hear from our Early Childhood Services teams, and gain an insight into our therapeutic counselling program, Circles of Support.



Acknowledgement of Country. YWCA Canberra proudly recognises the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to own and control their cultures, and pays respect around these rights. YWCA Canberra acknowledges the need to respect and encourage the diversity of Indigenous cultures and aims to respect Indigenous worldviews, lifestyles and customary laws.

WELCOME TO YNEWS

YWCA CANBERRA THIRD EDITION 2016.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



With this edition of Ynews, I am very pleased to also announce the launch of our 2015-16 Annual Report, which you can now download from the YWCA Canberra website.

This year's report details our success stories, social impact, and how we are tracking against the strategic directions and priorities set by our Board.

As you will read in the Annual Report, this year YWCA Canberra continued to demonstrate its values through our key areas of work in community services, children's services, training and education, and advocacy.

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Ahead of the upcoming ACT Election, YWCA Canberra has been continuing to advocate for social inclusion and gender equality, building off our election platform, Every woman, every child, every day, which outlines specific policy recommendations for the incoming ACT Government to create a more inclusive and equal Canberra.

We recently released an election scorecard, which ranks each major party against five key areas of concern for the ACT community. We worked closely with the ACT Greens, Canberra Liberals and ACT Labor to ensure their party's commitments were clearly captured in our scoring.

The final results saw the ACT Greens leading with a 70% result, followed by ACT Labor on 50% and Canberra Liberals on 40%. You can read more about the election scorecard and see the specific questions asked of each party on our website. We hope this will help our members take an informed vote to the polls at the election.

Keep an eye on our e-newsletter for details of our Christmas fundraising appeal, which will be launched soon, as well as our celebratory member event to herald the end of the year. I look forward to connecting with many of you then!

Kind regards,
Frances Crimmins

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Welcome to our third edition of Ynews. This is a special edition, which we have timed to coincide with our 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The AGM provides us with an opportunity to reflect on some of the highlights of the past year, and also look to the future. A major priority will be the continuation of the National Merger Project.

As you know, we have been working with other YWCAs across Australia over the past 18 months to explore the best future model to ensure the sustainability of the YWCA movement here. This process is still evolving, and the focus currently is determining if merging into a single, national organisation is in the best interests of our currently separate organisations.

Should we determine that merging to a single organisation is in the best interests of our local and national communities, we will call on you, our members to vote for its implementation at a special EGM next year. I will keep you informed going forward, and look forward to continuing this discussion over the coming year.

In preparing for the AGM, I was also able to reflect on some of our achievements this year, including the many awards we have received for our high quality services to the Canberra community. These awards include:

- Frances Crimmins, YWCA Canberra Executive Director, was recently named the Australian Institute of Management's ACT Leader of the Year;
- We received citation as a Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice;
- Our children's services team was awarded a NAPCAN Play Your Part award for Child Aware Local Initiative
- We were awarded two YOGIE awards for outstanding contributions to young people - for the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse and to Natasha Drumgold for Y'Aspire program management, and
- We were named winners in the ACTCOSS awards for innovation in partnership for the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse.

I look forward to seeing us build on these achievements in the coming 12 months!

Kind regards,
Kate Chipperfield

ADVOCACY

2016 ACT ELECTION SCORCARD

In the lead up to the ACT election, we want to ensure that gender equality and social inclusion are priorities for our candidates for Government.

That's why we have released an election scorecard, ranking each major party on their responses to five key issues facing Canberrans.

On 1 August, our Executive Director, Frances Crimmins, wrote to ACT Labor, The Canberra Liberals and ACT Greens asking for their responses on five key policy issues that address selected issues from the YWCA Canberra Election Platform: *Every woman, every child, every day.*

The five questions asked of each of the parties were:

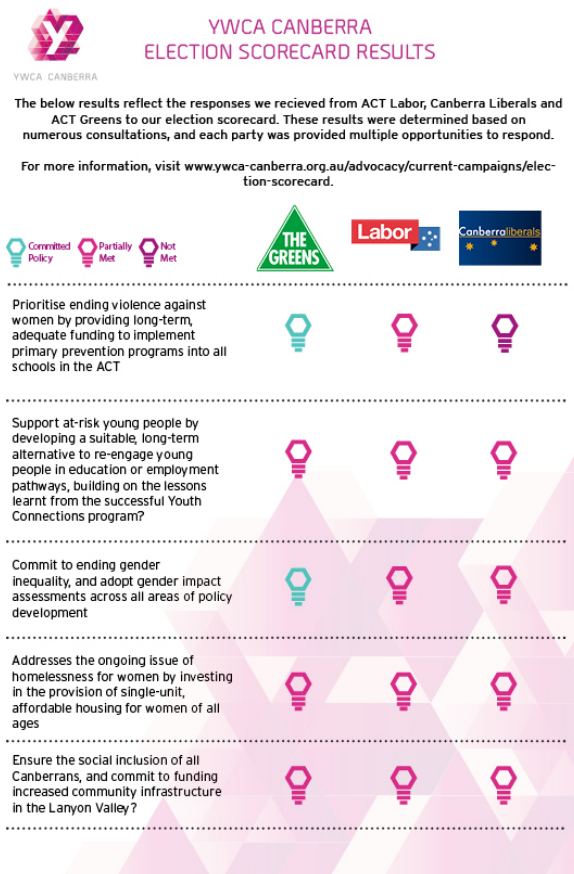
- 1. Will your party prioritise ending violence against women by providing long-term, adequate funding to implement primary prevention programs into all schools in the ACT?*
- 2. Will your party support at-risk young people by developing a suitable, long-term alternative to re-engage young people in education or employment pathways, building on the lessons learnt from the successful Youth Connections program?*
- 3. Will your party commit to ending gender inequality, and adopt gender impact assessments across all areas of policy development?*
- 4. Will your party address the ongoing issue of homelessness for women by investing in the provision of single-unit, affordable housing for women of all ages?*
- 5. Will your party ensure the social inclusion of all Canberrans, and commit to funding increased community infrastructure in the Lanyon Valley?*

We consulted with all major parties prior to releasing these results, and ensured that they had multiple opportunities to respond and adjust their responses.

Parties were then allocated scores out of ten, with every 'Committed policy' being allocated a two, every 'Partially met' policy being allocated a one, and policies that are 'Not met' being allocated a zero.

The goal of our election scorecard is to ensure that our members and the broader public can make an informed decision at the voting booths, with an understanding of each party's response to issues of social inclusion and gender equality.

For the full scorecard, verbatim answers provided by the parties and more information about our scoring process, please visit our website - <https://ywca-canberra.org.au/advocacy/current-campaignselectionscorecard/>



MEET THE CANDIDATES

On the evening of Thursday 9 September, members of the ACT community came together at YWCA House for a unique opportunity to meet the candidates.

More than 40 YWCA Canberra members and friends spent the evening chatting to 20 of the women standing for election to the ACT Legislative Assembly.

With representatives from the Canberra Liberals, ACT Labor, the ACT Greens, Like Canberra, and one independent, there was a candidate for everyone and energetic conversation aplenty.

The event was opened by YWCA Canberra Executive Director, Frances Crimmins, who highlighted the need for more women in politics. Frances noted that across State and Territory Governments, women hold only 27 per cent of Ministry positions.

“In the ACT, we fare slightly better” said Frances, “with women accounting for 35 per cent of MLA’s” - but we have a long way to go before equality is achieved.

Frances also discussed the enduring gender pay gap, and spoke proudly of the suite of leadership programs offered by YWCA Canberra that are designed to address the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles. The audience then heard from one representative from each party – ACT Greens Candidate for Kurrajong, Rebecca Vassarotti, Canberra Liberals Member for Brindabella, Nicole Lawder, Independent Candidate for Ginninderra, Leigh Watson, Like Canberra Candidate for Yerrabi, Casey Heffernan, and ACT Labor Candidate for Brindabella, Angie Drake.

We then moved on to the portion of the evening our attendees were waiting for – the speed networking session.

In small group, attendees spent the next hours rotating around the room, with 6 minutes to chat to each candidate, and ask questions about key policies and plans.

There was laughter, friendly interrogation, and, of course, lively debate! It was fantastic to see local politics in action, with the candidates doing their best to convince voters that their party would create the most positive change in the ACT.



It was excellent to hear many of the attendees and candidates discussing issues addressed in our election platform, Every Woman, Every Child, Every Day, including greater support for children and young people, work to reduce gender inequality and violence against women, and prioritising community inclusion.

The evening didn’t end when the networking rounds finished – our attendees and candidates simply had too much to talk about! The event was also a great opportunity for YWCA Canberra members and friends to network with each other – we love getting the Y community together.

We would like to extend our thanks to all of the candidates who took part in the event – Angie Drake, Nicole Lawder MLA, Tara Cheyne, Denise Fisher, Leigh Watson, Rebecca Vassarotti, Jill Thomsen, Leah Dwyer, Rachel Stephen-Smith, Candice Burch, Brooke Curtin, Elizabeth Lee, Emma Davidson, Jennifer Newman, Veronica Wensing, Meegan Fitzharris MLA, and Casey Heffernan – and to everyone who came along.

You can read more about these candidates, and others, and their vision for the ACT in our Meet a Candidate series on the YWCA Canberra blog and check out some great snaps from the event on our Flickr!

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

We have three dynamic and diverse Early Childhood centres across Canberra, delivering an educational and nurturing program to hundreds of children aged from six weeks old.

Here, we caught up with Louise, Liz and Penny, from our Winyu, Campbell Cottage and Conder Early Childhood services, as they share a glimpse of the recent approaches taken at each centre in order to promote learning, development and wellbeing.



Winyu

Louise Billman, Early Childhood Services Manager

We were delighted with last month's announcement that our innovative Winyu Early Childhood Service was shortlisted as a national finalist in the HESTA Early Childhood Education and Care Awards, in the Excellence in Building Inclusion category.

Our service has capacity for 90 children, many of whom come from refugee and migrant families. Recognising the barriers that many of these children and their families face, the Winyu team of educators remains dedicated to creating a service with a curriculum that caters specifically for those needs.

The announcement is a welcome recognition of our commitment to maintaining high quality early childhood education services for families in the Gungahlin region.

The award is sponsored by HESTA and ME Bank.

Conder

Penny Van Haeften, Assistant Director

Earth Room adventures

Children in the Earth room have been looking at Floriade over the past few weeks. It has been a hugely enjoyable experience, while also providing a great opportunity for us to connect with our local community. We have also started to build our own Floriade right here at the centre.

We started with a painted flower garden, and investigated some of the real flowers and plants that we found growing in our yard. Now, with great interest and enthusiasm, the children are working together to grow a real garden!

Sky Room exploration

In the Sky Room we have been bringing natural elements into our room, using them as decorations and incorporating them into our play. The children have recreated stories such as We're Going on a Bear Hunt, using rocks, plants, water, grass and mud to add a tangible element to the activity.

We have also included natural elements into our sensory play, using playdough to create gardens and homes for dinosaurs. This experience has led to discussions about our environment and why it's important that we take care of it, for ourselves and other living and non-living things.





Campbell Cottage

Liz Borger, Assistant Director

A big hello from our Sky Room.

In the past few weeks, we have been working on a number of exciting projects, one of which is our world map. We were gifted a large world map by one of our peers, Aaron, and his family, which prompted the idea to identify and pin point places on the map that are significant to the children, whether they be places children were born or have travelled to.

Our educators have also been involved in the project, and children are especially enjoying sharing their photos and stories.

Having our world map displayed in our room has also improved children's sense of security and connectedness to their community, as well as a great way to facilitate constructive conversations with the children about all the different places around the world.

We have also enjoyed working on our solar system project, with children showing strong curiosity about why the sky looks the way it does, the weather and what is hiding behind the clouds.

We have been learning about one planet at a time, and the knowledge the children are gathering is incredible. The children have made their own solar system by using papier mache and painting them to look just like the real ones. They look fabulous displayed in our room!



For more information about any of our Early Childhood Services, please visit our website or call 6175 9900

STAFF SNAPSHOT

PIP WHITE



We're really proud of the vibrancy and diversity of our staff team. We'll be bringing you regular staff snapshots so you can meet our team and find out a bit more about the people behind our programs and services. Today, meet Pip White, our Children's Services Account Manager

Tell us about your role at YWCA Canberra.

I'm the Children Services Account Manager and have been for eight years. I came to YWCA Canberra when we won the tender for the Rosary School Age Care program.

I manage a fantastic, dedicated team who work really hard at administrating and collecting all income through all of our services. A manager is only as good as the team behind her, and my team make me look so good!

What's on your playlist?

Rob Thomas, Ed Sheeran and whatever is on the radio at the time.

What is the most 'out-there' job you've ever had?

I worked a second job on Friday nights and Sundays at the Belconnen Westfield Concierge for three years. After that experience, there is nothing that the general public could do that would shock me. I have seen a large cross section of human nature at its best!

When you're not at work, what's your relaxation activity of choice?

Catching up with friends. I also love to watch my two girls play sport and getting away to our coastal retreat at Barlings Beach.

What is the scariest thing you've done in the past year?

Earlier this year, I went on an eight seater plane to the rim of the world's largest active volcano, on Tanna Island in Vanuatu!

What's an achievement that you're proud of?

Completing my Diploma of Management, thanks to YWCA Canberra's training and management teams.

How do you like to unwind?

With a glass of wine and a good book or a movie. I also enjoy hanging out with my girls when they aren't busy.

Who inspires you?

My mother. She is an amazing woman who is such a giver to others.

People would be surprised if they knew...

My great-great-great-great Uncle is Charles Perrault, who wrote many famous fairy tales, including Puss in Boots!

Who is your celebrity doppelganger?

I was told when I was much younger and going through my blonde phase that I reminded people of Kylie Minogue.

It must have been my moves on the dance floor in the 80s and 90s. I can't see it myself, but will take it!

What makes you proud to work at the Y?

The incredible team of people I work with in the delivery of so many high quality services. I'm also very grateful to work in a very supportive environment and management team.

MEET A MEMBER

MADDIE TIER

This article is part of our member profile series. Our members tell us that one of the things they love about being part of our community is getting to know like-minded women. So, each month, we'll feature an interview with a member, so you can get to know each other a little better. This month, meet Maddie Tier.

You in a nutshell?

Maddie. 26. Australia Public Servant working in Indigenous Affairs, on Land policy in the Northern Territory. I'm also a lawyer. In my spare time I like to lift heavy things, cook delicious things and read interesting things.

What's on your playlist?

Music-wise I've been listing to lots of smooth R'n'B, dare I say 'adult easy listening'. Particularly female artists. Think Alicia Keys and Yuna. When I'm at the gym, out on my bike, or running errands, I'm usually listening to podcasts though. Anything from Two Dope Queens to classic This American Life and of course Chat 10 Looks 3 with Leigh Sales and Annabel Crabb.

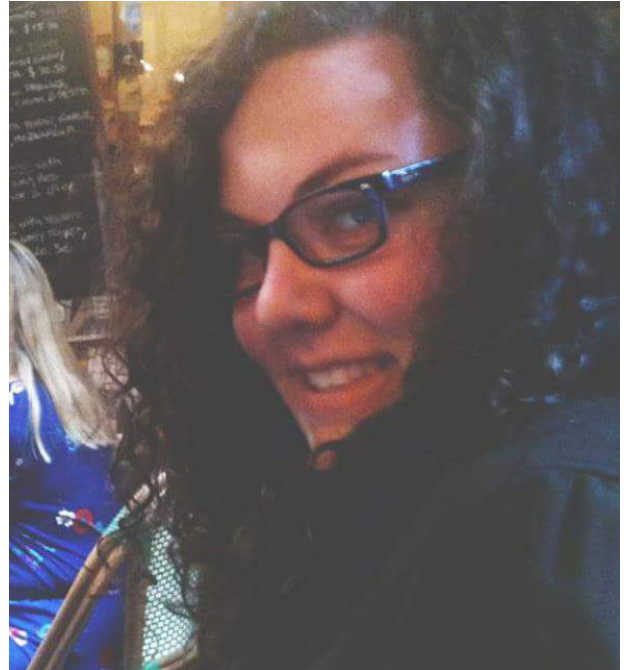
Who is your feminist hero?

Celeste Liddle from Rantings of an Aboriginal Feminist is my current feminist hero. She's an amazingly raw writer and speaker who resonates with pride and anger but also love. She's a fierce campaigner for intersectionality, particularly of feminism, race and class.

What are you reading?

I kind of accidentally swore off male authors, or at least, male narratives this year. I only half meant to do it - I've just craved literature of women authors writing novels with women leads like you crave your favourite food. I've just finished *The Hate Race* by Maxine Beneba Clarke which is a tough but vital read for any Australian.

I've just started *The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being Alone* by Olivia Laing lent to me by a dear friend who feeds me most of the great novels I read - she gave me Emily Maguire's *An Isolated Incident*, another great Australian work. I can't report much about it yet but I expect it to be wonderful and to make me very reflective.



Why did you join the Y?

I only really came to feminism in late high-school, so I really got involved in the feminist movement when I got to university at the ANU. Through the Women's Collective and another organisation I was a member of, Vocal Majority, I interacted with YWCA Canberra and YWCA Australia and I became a member back then.

Since I left university and joined the workforce I got involved with YWCA Canberra out of a desire to continue supporting and furthering women in my community. These days I'm a member of the Membership Committee and I'm excited to have just become involved in the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee.

What's the change you want to see in the world?

I'd like to see greater value placed on human life. I'd like systemic sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, classism (and more) addressed systematically rather than superficially.

Acknowledging that the economic system and social structures we work within are inherently oppressive. It's pretty radical to talk about dismantling the system, but I think real change requires people being willing to act radically.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

THE MURAL PROJECT

YWCA Canberra's Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre is located in Conder in the South Tuggeranong region of Canberra.

The Centre delivers activities and provides information and support that empowers community members and promotes community participation.

Recently, the Youth Engagement team collaborated with a range of local organisations in the Mural Project, giving the Youth Centre a makeover, and re-engaging local young people in the space.

The Lanyon Valley community came together last month for an open day at the Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre, highlighting the completion of a youth-led Mural Project, a collaborative initiative involving young people and community organisations in the Tuggeranong region.

More than 15 local young people helped to remove graffiti and litter from areas around the centre and adjacent skate park, and created a series of spray painted murals, under the guidance of street artist Geoff Filmer from Graffik Paint.

Over the course of two months, Geoff and the Youth Engagement team worked with the young people from across the region to create a mural that reflected their current interests.



The Project provided a creative outlet for young people in the community, and generated a renewed sense of pride and ownership of the space and the adjacent skate park.

There have been no incidents of graffiti or vandalism at the Centre since the project concluded, which is another great outcome.

A number of young people provided positive feedback about the project, including:

'It's our space, and we should get to make it ours!'

'It's really cool. I will look at it each time and think "I did that"!''

A longstanding part of the Lanyon Valley region, the Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre provides a number of opportunities for the community to engage in social, recreational and educational activities in a safe and welcoming environment.

We would like to thank Gordon Neighbourhood Watch, Graffik Paint, Parks and Territory Services and ACT Policing for their support on the project.

If you are interested to learn more please contact the Manager, Katherine Higgins on 02 6294 4633.

RESULTS BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

YWCA Canberra is dedicated to being a leading, ethical and sustainable organisation.

In order to ensure our work is achieving the strategic outcomes we have identified, we evaluate our programs using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) evaluation framework.

All of our outcomes can be clearly and simply defined under this framework, using three key questions:

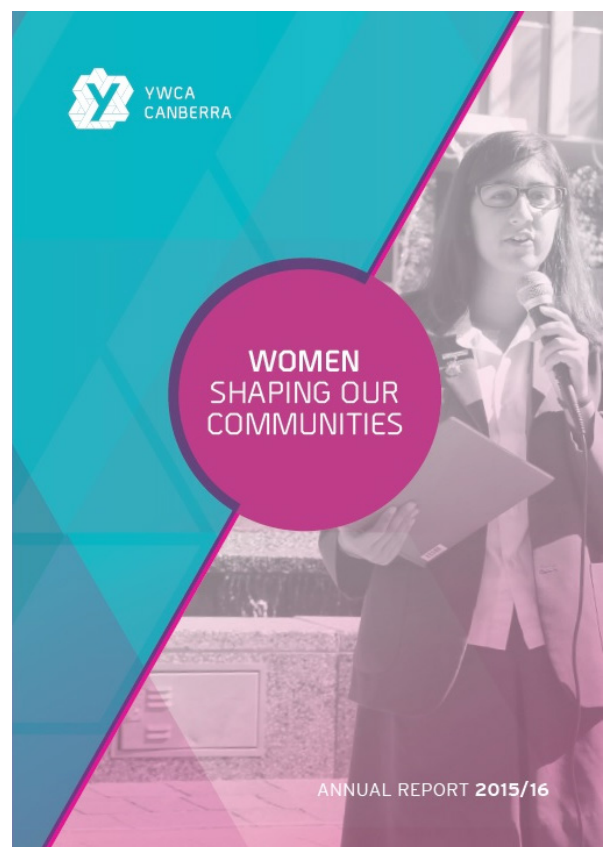
- * How much have we done?
- * How well have we done it?
- * Is anyone better off?

This year, we have invested in a data collection and analysis tool, SocialSuite, to further enhance our evaluation processes. SocialSuite a cloud-based application for both client record management and social outcomes measurement.

The software will help us refine our data collection processes, collect our program and survey data via computer, tablet and email, and will also be used for data analysis and interpretation.

We look forward to sharing the outcomes of our programs with our members, funding bodies and the broader community each year.

To find out more about our program achievements and evaluations, download a copy of our 2015-16 Annual Report at www.ywca-canberra.org.au/media-centre/publications-and-resources/.



SHE LEADS

COLLEGE CONFERENCE

On Tuesday July 26, nearly 100 young women came together at the University of Canberra's Ann Harding Conference Centre to explore their leadership values, make new connections, and develop skills to ignite their leadership journeys.

Have you ever considered how different the world would look if young women were supported to speak up, have their voices heard, and believe in the ability to lead? We have.

That's why YWCA Canberra hosts the annual She Leads College Conference for girls in years 11 and 12 - to empower the next generation of women leaders.

It was a chilly winter's day, but that didn't dull the spirits of attendees, partners or the YWCA Canberra team. The day was kicked off by Conference MC, Bel Yorston, whose energy and enthusiasm were truly infectious.

After a warm welcome to country from Ngunnawal woman, Selina Walker, and powerful opening remarks from YWCA Canberra Vice-President, Caitlin Sandercock, attendees were up out of their seats making the first of many new friends.

Bel's advice "the more you step out of your comfort zone, the closer you are to your growth zone" encouraged attendees to connect with others from a range of schools, and discuss questions from 'what is your biggest challenge as a leader or change maker?' to 'what do you love about being a woman in the world today?'

Attendees were then lucky enough to hear from Founder and Director of Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network and 2015 Bob Brown Young Conservationist of the year, Amelia Telford.

Amelia shared her inspiring leadership journey, from her high school days when she started thinking about climate change and conservation, to attending her first AYCC conference, to her decision to create a movement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth striving to achieve climate justice.



One of the key takeaways from Amelia's speech was that while environmental sustainability is important, there is nothing more important than self-sustainability, and as a leader, looking after your physical and mental health is paramount.

There was lots of laughter and great discussion throughout the morning session, where Bel spoke about the positive impacts of leadership and reinforced the idea that you do not need a title to be a leader - you just need to keep your eyes open for opportunities, back yourself, and stick to your leadership values.

This was the perfect lead in to the workshops presented by yLead's Bel, and the Defence Force Recruiting team led by Flight Lieutenant Annie Szekely. These engaging workshops got attendees thinking about leadership values, perseverance, accepting and supporting others, and how to lead from the middle rather than the top.



Attendees also had the chance to write an individual purpose statement - we were so moved and impressed by the purpose statements we were lucky enough to hear read aloud!

The highlight of the day for many came in the form of the afternoon networking session. In small groups, attendees had the chance to chat to 666 ABC radio producer, Farz Edraki, Global Resolutions ambassador, Caitlin Figueiredo, robotics and STEAM expert, Erica Hediger, gender quality advocate, Emma Pocock, professional cricketer, Ange Reakes, 2016 ACT Young Woman of the Year, Rachael Stevens, DFR specialist recruiter, Annie Szekely, and CEO of Country to Canberra, Hannah Wandel.

These inspiring women leaders gave so much incredible advice and left the audience (and the Y Canberra team) in awe. Some of the lessons attendees took away were; the only person who can choose your path is you, always believe in yourself and put together a support network of family, friends, and mentors, don't be afraid to change your career if you find your passion later in life, and that you should always speak your ideas out loud.



After a day packed full of leadership development and thought provoking discussion, attendees left feeling inspired to pursue their leadership goals.

We have no doubt these young women will go on to transform their communities and create positive change using their newly acquired leadership skills!



CIRCLES OF SUPPORT

MEET ARIEL FORD

We caught up with Ariel Ford, one of the Counsellors in our Circles of Support therapeutic program.

Circles of Support is a counselling service for children and young people aged eight to 15 years and their families. The service aims to strengthen family relationships and improve family members' wellbeing.

Below, we find out more about Ariel's passion for supporting children and young people, and what a typical week at work looks like for her!

Tell us a bit about yourself?

Hard to know where to start! I've worked with children and young people in a number of settings for 20 years. In each workplace, I've learnt more about my own values, what it is I am passionate about and how I want to be participating in our community.

I have a strong belief that we all have something very unique to offer, but finding a place where that can fit can be really difficult.

Core to who I am is a strong affinity to nature, a genuine love of people and a sense of social justice. As a result I've spent time working in environmental advocacy, alternative education and youth arts based programs.

I completed my Masters in Social Ecology many years ago and this helped me integrate my passion for both the environment and community.

As I've aged, I've found a strong need to be working in some way within these values. The Circles of Support program has provided a great basis for this.



How did you come to do this job?

As a youth worker, I had been working with young people for a number of years and across a range of settings. The nature of the places I was working meant that my clients had hugely complex backgrounds and rarely fitted well into a single category of support offered.

I was feeling as though there was a large divide between what was being offered as Youth Work support and what Counselling support was available.

I studied counselling as I was curious about the nature of counselling and how this could best meet young people half way and facilitate more access. The young people I had worked with were largely reluctant to engage in counselling as they needed to develop a lot of trust before they could share their story.

I felt that I was limited in how much support I could offer to the young people I was working with and I wanted to be a part of a more holistic approach to their wellbeing. When I saw the job advertised for Circles of support, it sounded like a good first step towards this.

Tell us about the Circles of Support program?

It's a beautiful little program, with a great team and amazing clients. We work with families who have children aged 8-15 years. We support them through counselling in a way that best addresses the often complex layers.

It can be a tricky balance between the degree of past experiences impacting on the family, what change is needed to help them move forward, and what support is required for that change to happen.

It often requires strong partnerships with other agencies, such as schools, caseworkers and health professionals, so that the family can be seen as a whole, not a series of incidences or problems to be solved.

Run us through a week in your life. What are you working on, where do you go, who do speak or work with?

The majority of my time is spent working one on one with families. I'm on the road a lot, so as to support people in the most accessible way. This can mean regularly visiting young people at school or sessions in any of our three offices across Canberra.

Sometimes I'll work primarily with the young person, sometimes with the parent, but always with the understanding of the family and community systems they are embedded in. In this way, the work can be both deeply personally focused on internal challenges, as well as supportive of the day-to-day structures needed to support the young person and their family.

What have been the greatest rewards of your work with the Y to date?

The incredible potential of humans to want more for themselves and to work towards their own healing. There is rarely a day that goes by when I don't sit with someone who has experienced the most extreme hardship, yet still expresses some level of joy or hope for the future. It always blows me away, particularly with young people.

Whenever I work with a young person, I am aware that I am not only working with their family history but I am also working with their future family, their children and grandchildren. It is not often that I will see the kind of immediate change many people aim for, but I know the change that does happen will be long lasting beyond the person in front of me.

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What's something you wish people knew about your job or the work that you do?

Probably that every one of my clients is doing the absolute best they can do given their circumstances.

Sometimes it's hard for people to see families in crisis as successful, but the questions I'm always asking are 'why does this way of being make sense to them', 'what has happened that this is the logical outcome to their situation' and then 'how can we go back and unpack that to create meaningful long term change'.

We're always interested to talk to people who feel like they are in need of support.

If you would like information about the service, or to refer children, young people and families, please visit our website, or call 6175 9900

SHE LEADS WORKSHOPS

SHARI READ

Shari Read is a YWCA Canberra member and has been involved in the She Leads Program across all of our events. She has been facilitating workshops and seminars in wellbeing and self-leadership since 2003 and holds a PhD in social psychology and post-qualification training in mindfulness, meditation, yoga and Buddhist psychotherapy. Here, Shari tells us why mindfulness and women's leadership are so important.

Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm a mum, a wife, and a teacher. I draw on my training in yoga and Buddhist psychotherapy, my doctorate in social psychology, my masters training in clinical psychology and my experience as an entrepreneur and business manager, and integrate these perspectives to help people develop ways of effectively leading positive change in the world.

I'm also a bit of a hippie - I have a vegetable garden, eight chickens and think The Matrix is the best movie ever made.

You've been involved with the She Leads Conference, the She Leads Diploma, and the She Leads Workshops a number of times - what do you think makes the She Leads program unique?

From my perspective, the She Leads program is unique in its grounding in a positive, non-radicalised approach to women's empowerment. It is supported by strong, confident women who themselves know how to lead and how to provide mentoring and role-modeling, an essential ingredient in the development of a leadership identity.

Why do you think achieving gender equality is important?

I would ask a couple of questions in return - why is keeping women on an uneven playing field so important to some people? Why are we being blocked from achieving equality? What are they scared of?

It is important because we are here, we are participating and 'they' can't do it without us.



What can participants expect from your upcoming Mindful Leadership Workshop?

People attending the upcoming Mindful Leadership workshop can expect to have some fun, to learn a bit about themselves, to learn mindfulness techniques or enhance their existing mindfulness practice, and how to apply this to their emerging or established leadership identity. It will be an opportunity for connection, reflection and insight.

You've just attended the Mindful Leadership Forum (jealous!), what's the coolest thing you learnt?

I've just come from my second Mindful Leadership Forum run by Jono Fisher and the amazing Wake Up Project team. This year was less about learning and more about remembering, consolidating, reflecting and integrating.

My greatest realisation over the two days was that the workplace conditions that give rise to optimal levels of motivation, innovation and engagement are also the same conditions that nurture compassion and create the space for emerging leaders to thrive.

Who's your feminist hero?

I love Clare Bowditch. She has had a hero's journey, she is real and makes no apologies for bringing her authenticity to everything she does. She is bold, she is brave and she creates a space for other people to experiment with being messy.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

SHE LEADS DIPLOMA

Fiona Day has recently graduated from the She Leads Diploma of Leadership & Management. Fiona is passionate about empowering the community around her. Here, we get to know Fiona a bit better, as she shares how the She Leads Diploma has impacted on her leadership goals.

Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I've lived in Canberra since my family moved here when I was three, so I've done all my growing and schooling here. I completed a BA Communication at the University of Canberra, and subsequently returned to do my Graduate Certificate in Community Counselling.

My heart has always been with those who are marginalised, vulnerable or don't have a voice, so I gravitated to the community sector early in my working life. Apart from a few brief forays into the corporate and government sectors, I've worked for local not-for-profits since 1998.

My work has encompassed roles in counselling, administration, project work, and management across a variety of agencies including Parentline, The Big Issue (auspiced by Woden Community Service), Directions Alcohol & Other Drug service and most recently, Tenants' Union ACT.

How would you describe the She Leads Diploma to someone who was hearing about it for the first time?

The Diploma is a fantastic way to challenge and learn more about yourself, not just professionally but personally as well. The classes offer a great balance between presentation and discussion, with excellent facilitators who are skilled at adapting the material to ensure it is interesting and relevant.

For me, one of the surprising things about the Diploma was the realisation of how little time people, and particularly women, seem to take to stop and consider where they are, why they are there, what motivates/inspires/drains them, and how they fit in the big scheme of their own lives.

How has the She Leads Diploma impacted on you?

The She Leads Diploma reminded me to stop and think about things. It's easy to be so busy that one starts to operate on autopilot, and that's a sure fire way to shut down or diminish the chance to make positive changes.

Although not the sole reason for change, the biggest impact the Diploma had for me was influencing the decision to leave a job I loved, but had been doing for many years, and start a new chapter in my working life. I think the Diploma helped me realise that success has many different guises, and the focus of the course for me was not about how to advance to the next level at work, but rather how to find the niche that was right for me.

Why do you think it's important to have women's leadership programs?

Because gender inequality is still very much alive and well in Australia in 2016 and there is, sadly, a long way to go to redress the imbalance that diminishes the opportunities for women in leadership roles across the work, home, community and political landscapes.

What's your top piece of advice for aspiring women leaders?

Don't think you have to know everything or be at the top of the tree before you can call yourself a leader. If you collaborate with others, act with integrity, reflect honestly on yourself and strive to improve, you'll be a long way ahead on the leadership pathway.



PARTNERSHIPS: THE SNOW FOUNDATION

The YWCA Canberra Clubhouse is a high tech digital studio where Tuggeranong youth collaborate with industry mentors to design, create, and pursue their passions.

Today, over 100 Clubhouses in 20 countries reach tens of thousands of young people from underserved communities each year. Many were started with funding by Intel Corporation, which has invested \$50 million since 2000.

The sustainability and success of the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse is determined by the support of corporate and philanthropic partnerships. These partnerships may comprise software and hardware contributions, professional mentoring for clubhouse members, and financial contributions to cover operating costs.

In this issue of Ynews, we want to highlight a partnership that has contributed to the Clubhouse's success right from the beginning!

The Snow Foundation have been a significant support of the Clubhouse. The Snow Foundation is the creation of brothers Terry Snow and George Snow who established the foundation in 1991 to benefit the disadvantaged community in Canberra and the surrounding region.

In 2014, The Snow Foundation provided a \$20,000 grant to the Clubhouse to support the operational aspects of the project. They have built on this initial support with a further \$30,000 over 2016-18, to support the role of the Clubhouse Coordinator, which is crucial to the success of the program.



“The YWCA Canberra Clubhouse is a perfect fit for The Snow Foundation as one of our key focus areas is to fund education and life skills programs for children and adults.”



Georgina Bryon, CEO The Snow Foundation said, “The YWCA Canberra Clubhouse is a perfect fit for The Snow Foundation as one of our key focus areas is to fund education and life skills programs for children and adults.

“This program encompasses all that is good about the Canberra community - volunteers, government, community, corporate and philanthropic groups working together to provide students with the skills to explore and experience the ever changing digital world.

It allows young people to become engaged, confident and creative in a safe and supportive environment.”

On behalf of YWCA Canberra and our Clubhouse members, we'd like to thank the Snow Foundation for their ongoing support for this important initiative!

OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom

The LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom is an opportunity for young people aged 12-25 to experience a formal style event and express their identity in a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment. This event will be strictly drug and alcohol free.

When: Friday, October 14 2016

Time: 6:30pm - 10:00pm

Where: Ainslie Arts Centre, Elouera Street, Braddon

Tickets available at <https://ywca-canberra.org.au/event/prom/>

SHE LEADS WORKSHOPS

Board Governance

The Governance Workshop provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of board and committee members, different governance models, how boards operate, and an outline of the legal responsibilities of board and committee members.

When: 5:30pm to 8:30pm, 25 October 2016

Venue: Level 3, 71 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra

Cost: \$35 members / \$50 non-members

More information at <https://ywca-canberra.org.au/event/she-leads-governance-workshop/>



SHE LEADS WORKSHOPS

Mindful Leadership

This interactive workshop will provide an opportunity to explore the concept of mindful leadership and experiment with a number of easy, practical techniques that will have you immediately on the path to becoming a mindful leader.

When: 5:30pm to 8:30pm, 29 November 2016

Venue: Level 3, 71 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City 2601

Cost: \$35 members / \$50 non-members

More information at <https://ywca-canberra.org.au/event/she-leads-workshop-mindful-leadership-2/>



JOB VACANCIES

We are looking for a:

- Senior Policy Officer
- Communication Manager
- Graphic Designer

to join our highly collaborative and dynamic Communication, Advocacy and Fundraising team!

To find out more about each of these positions, including information on how to apply, please visit our website - <https://ywca-canberra.org.au/about-us/careers/>

MEET THE CANDIDATES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, YWCA HOUSE

