

YNEWS

FOURTH EDITION 2016



YWCA CANBERRA



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WELCOME TO YNEWS FOURTH EDITION 2016



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As the year draws to a close, I've been reflecting on the many local, national and global challenges that face organisations and individuals that are working towards positive social change. While we have seen some disappointing outcomes in the international political arena, as well as here in Australia, I am buoyed by the goodwill and opportunities that continue to come our way here in Canberra.

Over the last quarter we've formed a number of exciting new partnerships, strengthened our programs and services, and continued to see our wonderful staff kicking goals in all areas of our work.

This month, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) awarded us our third Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation, recognising our ongoing commitment to proactively pursuing gender equality in our workplace.

We are thrilled to receive this accolade, and remain one of only two organisations in the ACT to achieve this status. More information about the citation can be found on our [website](#).

We also recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with United Voice, the union for early childhood education and care professionals, as part of their Every Child Counts Promise campaign.

This is a public acknowledgement of YWCA Canberra's dedication to providing equal and adequate pay to our early childhood educators, recognising the important contribution they make in our community.

In September, YWCA Canberra was the recipient of a NAPCAN 'Play Your Part' award, in recognition of our partnership with several other local government and community organisations to form the Child Aware Local Initiative (CALI) project in south Tuggeranong.

CALI played an important role in supporting families and their children, connecting them to a range of important services and improving the development and wellbeing of children in the region overall.

I would like to particularly congratulate our Early Childhood Services Manager, Louise Billman, and, O'Connor School Age Care Program Manager, Vikki Marden, who both received awards at the ACT Children's Week ceremony in October. The awards are a recognition of their exceptional approach to providing education and care for the Canberra community.

Our 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in October, where we celebrated our achievements with more than 80 members, friends and staff, and elected new board members.

I am delighted to welcome Jude Burger as our new President, along with Betty Ferguson and Marni Pilgrim who join nine other Board Directors. We also launched our 2015 - 16 Annual Report at the AGM, and if you haven't yet had a chance to read it, you can download a copy from our [website](#).

We're also excited to welcome the new representatives of the ACT Government, and look forward to continuing to take an active approach to engaging with Members of the Legislative Assembly, and continuing our advocacy on social inclusion and gender equality.

Through our advocacy, we strive to see the best possible outcomes for everyone in the Canberra community, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Finally, I wish everybody a safe, relaxing and enjoyable holiday period. I look forward to catching up with you next year.

Kind regards,

Frances Crimmins
Executive Director | YWCA Canberra



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am delighted and honoured to hold the position of President of YWCA Canberra during these exciting times. Not only is our organisation growing from strength to strength with our service offerings and programs, we also have an opportunity to build a national presence which is both rare and inspiring.

The merger process is a fascinating one, with many twists and turns as the Australian YWCA associations come together, and I am confident that my experience shaping such processes will assist YWCA Canberra to navigate successfully through this opportunity.

On 19 November, YWCA Australia held its national AGM, which was followed by a day of meetings with the Executive Directors, Presidents and a young woman board member. This weekend was fortuitously timed with the readiness of all associations to sign the Statement of Intent, which now paves the way for Phase 2 of the merger.

This is when we build the documents to outline the structure of the new organisation in advance of a "merger vote" to present to our members. Our Board has created a subcommittee to be able to respond quickly to merger issues as they arise, and we plan to have member and staff engagement sessions regularly as the plans develop.

Now for a little background about me.

My roles are usually as a project based change manager, focusing on organisational transformation. I support public and private organisations undergoing significant transformation, for instance change driven by integration, culture, or business imperatives. I also run a business called Think Act Relate which focuses on personal transformation.

I first became involved with YWCA Canberra through our Board Training Course in 2004. I served as Treasurer for two years, Vice President for four years, and Chair of the Nominations Committee for three years.

My motivation to be involved with the Y for over a decade (so far) has been driven by:

- The quality of events, programs, advocacy and support the Y provides Canberra
- The high quality of the leadership and board governance - among the best I have ever worked with
- The high level of alignment of the people involved with the organisation (staff, members, volunteers) to the Y's strategic goals and values

I am greatly looking forward to an ever deepening engagement with the organisation during this next year. Until then, I wish you all a wonderful holiday season.

Kind regards,

Jude Burger
President | YWCA Canberra

YWCA CANBERRA RECOGNISED AS EMPLOYER OF CHOICE FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR

We are thrilled to accept the accolade of Employer of Choice from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) for the third successive year.

YWCA Canberra is currently one of only two Canberra organisations to receive this citation, acknowledging gender equality as a top priority in advancing opportunities for women.

YWCA Canberra Executive Director, Frances Crimmins, said "As a leading, feminist organisation striving for positive social change, we ensure our policies and practices advance equal opportunities for women.

"The WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation recognises these efforts, and sends a strong message to employers from all sectors about the importance of equal opportunity and equal pay for all staff, regardless of their gender."

Trends in this year's recipients include a focus on flexibility, greater support for women to progress into leadership positions, and more sophisticated analysis of the causes of gender pay gaps.

WGEA Director Libby Lyons said, "WGEA data shows there is progress towards gender equality in Australian workplaces, but it is too slow.

"It is only through more employers adopting leading practices to promote gender equality in the workplace that we will see the pace of change pick up.

"That's why it is so encouraging to see more than 100 organisations meet the very high standard required to receive the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation this year.

"I congratulate all the 2016 citation holders for their commitment and recognition of the strong business case for gender equality. I hope to see continued growth in this community of leading practice employers."

Find out more about the WGEA Employer of Choice citation at <https://www.wgea.gov.au/>.





HOLIDAY HAMPERS: A HUGE SUCCESS

Our Holiday Hampers appeal aimed to provide essential items for vulnerable Canberra families and their children, and many others in need this festive season. With the support of our members, staff and friends, we raised an incredible \$10,182 in financial and in-kind donations, allowing us to create 25 special hampers, filled with children's toys, school supplies, festive food items, gift vouchers, toiletries and pampering products.

We have been overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of so many Canberrans. Thank you for making this time of year a little brighter for these families in need!

We are particularly grateful for the contributions made by the following donors:

EY Canberra
 Australian Institute of Management
 Griffin Legal
 Lifeline Canberra
 Zone 3 Canberra

Skate Nation Roller Skating Rink
 YWCA Canberra School Age Care families
 YWCA Canberra Staff

FOOD HUB FULL TO THE BRIM

We'd like to give a shout out to Gai Brodtmann MP, whose team has supported our Lanyon Food Hub through her Giving Tree initiative. At this time of year, our Food Hub provides much needed healthy and nutritious food to more than 100 people a week. Without the support of the community, we wouldn't be able to keep up with demand.

We'd also like to acknowledge our dedicated volunteer team who work tirelessly to keep our Food Hub shelves stocked, and provide a warm welcome to all our clients each week.

If you'd like to find out more about our Food Hub, and the work we do at our Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre, visit our website.



NATIONAL NEWS: SIGNING THE STATEMENT OF INTENT

On Saturday 19 November 2016, representatives of the 12 YWCA Member Associations (MAs) of Australia signed a document called the Statement of Intent, outlining our commitment to pursuing the possibility of merging into one united entity. YWCA Canberra President, Jude Burger was the signatory for YWCA Canberra and our Executive Director, Frances Crimmins was in attendance.

The Statement of Intent will now guide the operational and governance work that is required in order to fully ascertain the opportunities and challenges associated with merging all YWCA MAs. The document also outlines the vision for the future of the YWCA in Australia, the key features of the potential restructured organisation, and the key conditions that will need to be met in order for a restructure to progress. This includes a plan for critical areas of work such as ensuring due diligence has

been completed for all legal, financial and governance aspects of the project.

Currently the governance and operational executive team are devising a timeline of key milestones and decision points for the project, including when a final recommendation will be put to individual members of each MA. Ultimately, it is our members who will vote on whether to merge or not, and we therefore look forward to keeping you informed of our progress on this important initiative.

In the meantime, if you would like to find out about the background of this project, please see the National Merger Project page on our [website](http://www.ywca-canberra.org.au) which is updated regularly, or email merger@ywca-canberra.org.au.



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

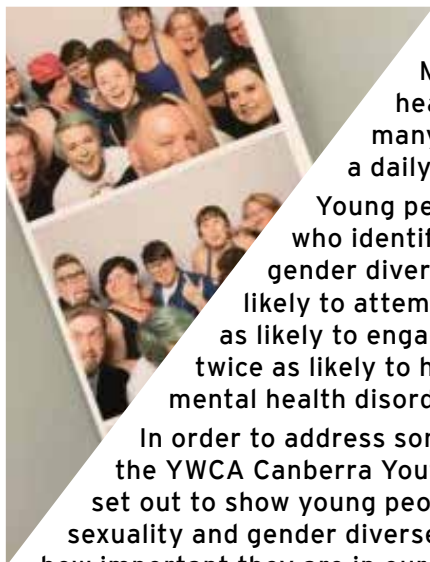
Each year, organisations and individuals around the world take part in the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender Violence campaign. The 16 Days campaign begins on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and ends on International Human Rights Day. These two dates highlight the fact that violence against women is a human rights abuse.

The purpose of the 16 Days campaign is to raise awareness about the impact of violence against women, and to encourage people to come together to find solutions. This year, we ran a social media campaign sharing a range of facts about the prevalence and impact of violence against women,

and also drawing attention to some of the programs and services that we offer to address gender inequality.

We also held an Orange the World morning tea, to raise awareness among our staff, and to raise funds for our Holiday Hampers appeal.

The Orange the World concept originates from a parallel campaign run by UN Women to end violence against women and girls. So we invited staff to wear orange clothing and to bring orange food items to share. We were so impressed by the creativity and generosity of our staff. We're lucky to be surrounded by inspiring, empowered women every day!



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER AT THE LGBTQIA+ PROM!

Maintaining mental health is a challenge that many people face on a daily basis.

Young people aged 12-25 years who identify as sexuality and gender diverse are five times more likely to attempt suicide, almost twice as likely to engage in self-harm, and twice as likely to have symptoms of a mental health disorder.

In order to address some of these issues, the YWCA Canberra Youth Engagement Team set out to show young people who identify as sexuality and gender diverse, and their allies, just how important they are in our community, and give them an experience to remember.

With support from an ACT Mental Health Week grant, and from a range of local organisations including Aids Action Council, A Gender Agenda, Belconnen Community Service, Headspace, Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT and the Woden Community Services Youth Engagement Team, The LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom was born.

Held on October 14 at the Ainslie Arts Centre, the LGBTQIA+ & Allies Prom saw 78 young people come together in a safe and inclusive space, to dance the night away and form connections with their peers and a

range of ACT organisations.

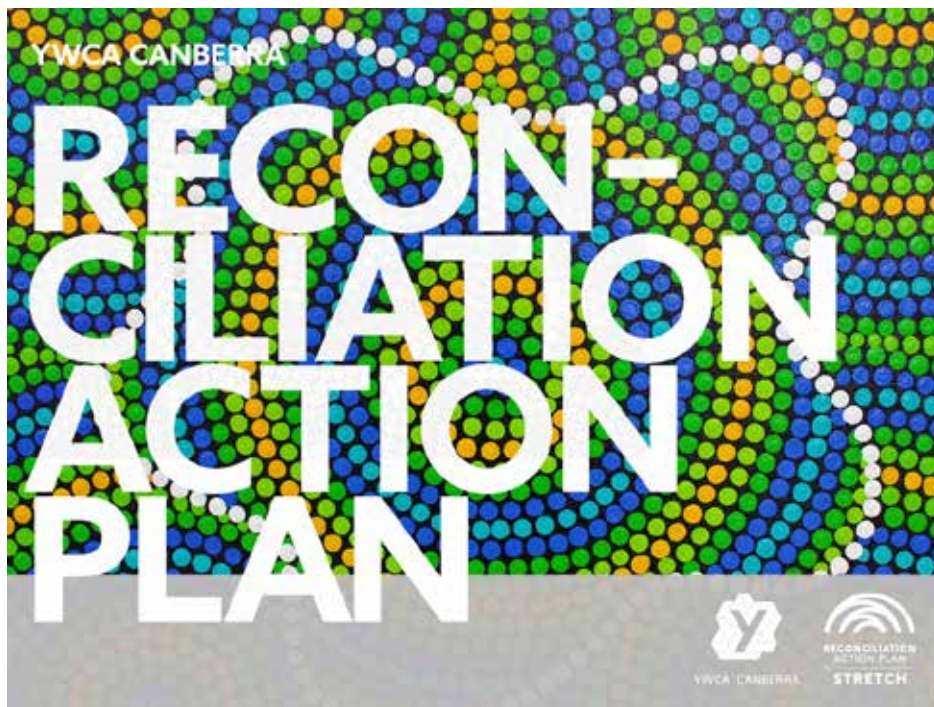
The Prom featured a professional DJ, a free photo booth, a lolly bar, and a catered dinner. Needless to say, energy levels were kept high throughout the evening! More than 20 staff from supporting organisations also attended the event, and provided information about the range of mental health services available for young people in the ACT.

Deputy Executive Director of the Aids Action Council, Sue Webeck, gave an inspirational speech that highlighted the importance of supporting one another and seeking help if needed. She acknowledged the amount of community support available to assist young people in need, and attendees were encouraged to continue to embrace and celebrate their diversity.

Feedback was very positive, with attendees thrilled at the opportunity to make new friends and express themselves. Parents of our young attendees were also impressed with how comfortable and happy their young people felt after the event.

Attendees have asked for the Prom to become an annual event - so look out 2017, the LGBTQIA + Allies Prom is going to be even bigger and better!

If you would like more information about our Youth Engagement Team, or programs that are available for young people at the Lanyon Youth Centre, please visit our [website](#).



RAP LAUNCH WRAP UP: THAT'S A RAPI!

On Thursday 8 December, YWCA Canberra launched its Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) at a lunchtime event at our Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre.

At YWCA Canberra, we strive to be a community leader in reconciliation by continuously building on our commitment to closing the gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community.

The purpose of our Stretch RAP is to formalise and publicise our ongoing commitment to reconciliation, and to inform our decision making as an organisation.

The RAP launch brought together representatives from across the Canberra community, including Ngunnawal Elder Aunty Jannette Phillips, community sector professionals, YWCA Canberra Board Directors and staff, and an up and coming young musician, Dark Rose.

Aunty Jannette kicked off the event with a welcome to country, throughout which she shared insights into the importance of reconciliation and working together as a community. We were particularly moved by her declaration that “knowledge disperses fear” and her personal motto “each one teach one”.

Aunty Jannette finished with a message of kindness and hope, saying “as you embark on the next leg of your service to our community, and the next phase of your reconciliation journey, I wish you luck and thank you for continuing to walk and work with us, the Ngunnawal people”.

Next, we heard from YWCA Canberra Executive Director, Frances Crimmins, and former Board Director and RAP Working Group member, Sarah Stewart. Both spoke about YWCA Canberra's dedication not only to taking action on reconciliation within the organisation, but also to championing reconciliation across the broader Canberra community.

Frances said, “RAPs are powerful tools for advancing social change by transforming the attitudes and behaviours of the three million people working or studying in organisations with a RAP. YWCA Canberra has a long and rich history of working with women, young women, girls, and their families to achieve

equality for all, and we look forward to continuing the fight for gender equality and reconciliation”.

Sarah shared with the audience how proud she felt to be part of an organisation championing equality for all, and particularly how proud she is of the steps that YWCA Canberra has taken in support of reconciliation.

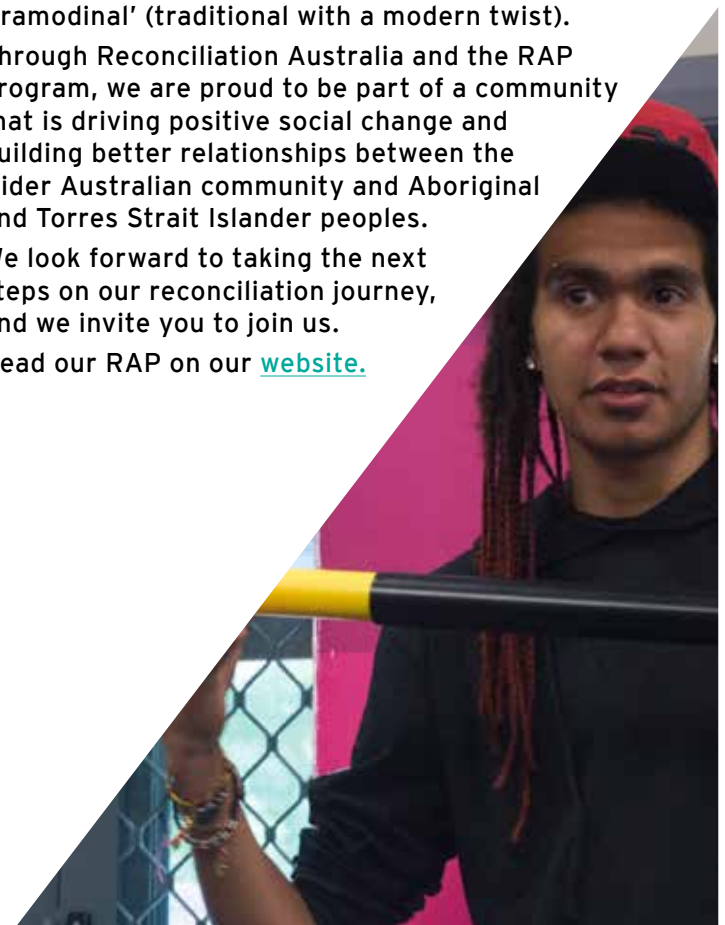
The audience then had the exciting opportunity to hear from one of Canberra's up and coming Aboriginal musicians, Roland Brown, aka Dark Rose.

Roland shared his journey, from teaching himself to play the didgeridoo in early 2016, to moving on to playing the didjeribone, and the creation of his own genre ‘tramodinal’ (traditional with a modern twist).

Through Reconciliation Australia and the RAP program, we are proud to be part of a community that is driving positive social change and building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We look forward to taking the next steps on our reconciliation journey, and we invite you to join us.

Read our RAP on our [website](#).



FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATOR PROFILE: FAHMIDA QUADIR



Fahmida Quadir is a passionate, dedicated and experienced early childhood care service provider, and part of the YWCA Canberra Family Day Care Scheme. Here, we learn a little more about her and her incredible career in the childcare industry, which spans more than 17 years.

Tell us a bit about yourself

I am a mother, a wife and a grandmother. I grew up in Bangladesh, where I studied a Bachelor and Masters of Sociology. In 1995, I migrated to Australia with my husband and two young children, where I spent the first year living in Brisbane. After that, we moved to Leeton, which is a small town in the Riverina Region of NSW.

When my children started primary school, I began working as part of the Western Riverina Family Day Care Scheme, which gave me something to do during the day, and stopped me from feeling lonely at home. I was drawn to the flexibility and convenience of working in my own home, and I found that caring for children gave me a great sense of pride and purpose.

After five years in Leeton, my family and I moved to Canberra, and I joined the YWCA Canberra Family Day Care Scheme after it was recommended to me by a close friend. In January, I will celebrate 10 years working with YWCA Canberra.

What drew you to work as a YWCA Canberra Family Day Care Educator? What do you love about it?

YWCA Canberra's Family Day Care Scheme provides me with much more than an income; it is a very well organised, supportive and efficient system. Back in Leeton, I was responsible for the administrative duties of running my Family Day Care service, and my role included cash handling, managing childcare rebates and more.

I am grateful that I no longer have to worry about these things, as they are managed by the YWCA Canberra team. This leaves me free to focus my attention on the children, and put my energy into providing the best service I possibly can for families.

Working as a YWCA Canberra Family Day Care educator has also afforded me the opportunity to build my networks and make lasting friendships with other women in the Canberra community. It's nice to know I am surrounded by kind and helpful people, including all of the wonderful women in the YWCA Canberra Quality Support Unit, who often visit me to provide reassurance and support for my service.

Tell us a little more about your service. What is the most rewarding thing about your role?

At the moment, I care for up to three children each day. These children range in age from one year to almost five. Above all, I work hard to make sure that at all times

I provide a happy and welcoming atmosphere for these children, with safety and security as my main priorities.

I spend a lot of time planning educational and engaging activities for children, encouraging their learning through play. I also help to guide good behaviour, insisting children use good manners and play respectfully with one another, and I think it's also important for me to model this behaviour for them.

It is very rewarding for me to watch children growing and learning, and I am so grateful for all of the lovely, appreciative feedback provided by parents. It's nice to think about how I am an important part of the lives of these families.

And the most challenging thing?

I think that one of the most challenging things in my role can be getting to know a new child and their family. I make an effort to find out everything I can about that child from their parents, and work hard to establish trust and understanding.

Having good communication with families is so important, and having a clear understanding of everybody's expectations makes everything easier. Ultimately, these children are small people, but a big responsibility! That is certainly a challenge in itself.

What is something about your job that you wish people knew?

My experience as a Family Day Care educator has had a profound effect on me and my family. I am very grateful to my husband, who has always given me a lot of support. He was a great help to me after we arrived in Australia, when I worked hard to improve my English, which I learned as a second language (Bengali is my mother tongue).

My work has also had a big influence on my two adult children, who in the later years of their childhood, really enjoyed having other children in the house to play with.

My son is now 25, and lives in Sydney. He is studying his Masters of Pediatric Medicine at Westmead Children's Hospital. He says having young children in our home while he was younger has motivated him to become a children's health specialist. I am very proud of both of my children, and I love my job. I plan to continue working as a Family Day Care educator for as long as possible.

If you would like to find out more about the YWCA Canberra Family Day Care Scheme, or any of our Early Childhood Services, please visit our [website](#) or call 6175 9900.



PROFILE: JUDI MARTIN TRAINING UNIT – MEET JUDI MARTIN

We caught up with Judi Martin, one of the Trainers in our nationally recognised Training Unit. Our Training Unit offers a diverse range of accredited and non-accredited courses, and nurtures a culture of learning within the organisation and the broader community. Below, we find out about Judi's experience, her plans for the She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management, and her upcoming overseas adventures!

Who are you? Tell us about yourself!

Like most people, I feel like I wear a lot of different hats in my life. I am the wife of incredible man who has the patience of a saint, and the mother of two amazing children who have just left the nest. I am passionate about education and providing the opportunity to learn. I love to travel, but love to come home just as much!

I started my professional life as a librarian, then an IT project manager. I decided to leave the Public Service and teach at CIT in library studies and IT. After completing my Masters, I lectured at Charles Sturt University in adult education. I feel like I've had a wonderfully varied career so far!

You've recently joined the YWCA Canberra Training Unit - what has your impression been so far?

My impression has been that the Training Unit is friendly, supportive, professional, and committed to facilitating great learning experiences. It's a great place to work!

You're now the trainer behind the She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management. What have you got planned for the Diploma in 2017?

I'm keen to provide program participants with even more mentoring opportunities, with both graduates of the Diploma and strong women leaders from the community. I'm on the lookout for inspiring women to feature on panels and to facilitate different modules.

What do you think the strengths of the Diploma are?

I've only been at the Y for a short time, but already I can see so many strengths! The networking opportunities, the incredible personal and professional growth that the participants experience, and the increase in personal awareness are all things that stand out to me. Another thing is the increased confidence that the participants have in their strengths and abilities, which is so important for them to have!

You're also about to head overseas to teach - where are you going and what will you be doing?

I am going to Kenya with three pharmacists and two other teachers, through Global School Partners. The pharmacists are teaching basic first aid and have donations of bandages and first aid books. The group of teachers are spending some time with the children in each of the schools, and we'll be spending one day with the teachers from each of the 17 schools as well. Global School Partners currently has 17 Partner Schools in Kenya, each partnered with an Australian Donor School.

Who are you inspired by?

My father has been one of the biggest inspirations in my life. His father died when he was six, and he never got the chance for an education, as he had to help out on the family dairy farm. He was determined that his children would all be educated and go to university - continual education was his passion, and he was always reading and learning and sharing his ideas with anyone who would listen.

To find out more about the courses available through the YWCA Canberra Training Unit, head to our [website](#), or call 6175 9900.

GREAT YDEAS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Have you got a great idea, but aren't sure how to get started?

YWCA Canberra's Great Ydeas Small Grants Program provides funds to local women and girls to pursue a professional development opportunity, pilot a project, kick-start a business idea, or address a need in the community.

The program is open to YWCA Canberra members, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and young women under 30 are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applications open Monday 20 February, and close Friday 30 March.

To read more about the 2016 recipients and their projects, visit our [website](#).



EDNA RYAN AWARDS

We're lucky to have countless incredible women leaders in our YWCA Canberra networks. Three of those women recently received Edna Ryan Awards, in recognition of their work to advance the status of women.

YWCA Canberra Board Director and Founder of Cooking Circles, Heidi Zajac, and Co-Founders of womenCANplay, Hannah Massingham and Billi McCarthy-Price, were honoured to receive their Ednas at an awards ceremony on Friday 14 October. Both Cooking Circles and womenCANplay received seed funding from YWCA Canberra's Great Ydeas Small Grants Program in 2015.

The awards were created in 1998 in honour of Edna Ryan, who fought for equal wages and conditions for Australian women for more than 30 years. The awards recognise women from NSW and the ACT who have made a feminist difference across ten categories, from community activism, to mentoring, to sport.

Heidi received a Community Activism Award for making a feminist difference in the community through Cooking Circles. Cooking Circles brings women together to share culture, stories and recipes, and cook and eat together.

Heidi's inspiration for Cooking Circles began in Timor Leste in 2012, while she was there on a three week trip to support local women to establish a YWCA. On that trip, she found that the practice of preparing, cooking and talking about food together created a platform from which connections and friendships could be strengthened, and a range of conversation topics could effortlessly arise, such as gender, nutrition, politics, education and language.

Now in its second year, Cooking Circles continues to create and facilitate cooking networks for women in Canberra, with the aim of building connection between women to address social isolation. Through a range of discussion panel events, Cooking Circles also provides opportunities for women in public speaking, helping to build their skills, confidence and networks.



Hannah and Billi received a joint Sport Award, for their work to increase women's participation in sports across the ACT.

womenCANplay is a web-based project which provides women with the information they need to get involved in sport. Billi and Hannah want to see more women involved in sport in the ACT and Australia, whether through playing, spectating, coaching, refereeing, being a club member, or contributing to sports news through photography or writing.

womenCANplay builds on research by UN Women, Ernst and Young, and the Women's Sport Foundation, which shows that female participation in sport produces a variety of benefits, such as increased self-confidence and sense of belonging, accelerated leadership and career potential, and a way to challenge gender stereotypes and make progress towards gender equality.

Heidi, Hannah, and Billi were excited to receive their Ednas, and we're sure they will continue to work to make a feminist difference to the lives of women across Australia!



MEET A MEMBER – CARINA ZECCOLA

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. This Ynews edition, meet Carina Zeccola.

You in a nutshell?

I am a born and bred Canberra local, with an extended Italian migrant family. I studied law and actuarial studies at the Australian National University and have worked in private practice as a lawyer at Griffin Legal since 2013.

I love to bake and to travel (usually to escape the Canberra winters, which I am surprisingly not acclimatised to!).

I am unable to sit still for long, which probably explains why I am currently undertaking coursework for my fifth

qualification in four years. I am a strong advocate of lifelong learning.

Why did you join the Y?

I have been involved in several not-for-profit and community organisations since high school. I first heard about YWCA Canberra through a colleague at work and attended an event. The values and mission of the Y to support women and girls in such diverse ways really resonated with me as a young woman. The Y supports women in crisis in the community, as well as women of all ages with their personal and professional development. The Y recognises the importance of providing opportunity to women who are disadvantaged because of gender inequality.

Women need to support and develop other women; it is by doing this that we will achieve gender equality and naturally develop a network of people that women can rely upon to achieve their goals by sharing their experiences and challenges.

I graduated from the YWCA Canberra She Leads Diploma of Leadership & Management in 2016, which contributed to my development in both my professional career and on a personal level. It is a program which I cannot

recommend strongly enough to any young woman wanting to discover and develop their leadership and management style.

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

A greater sense of community. A community is often founded on a mutual purpose, responsibility, respect and commitment, providing individuals with a meaning. It is vital that every individual is part of community offering a support network and others to rely on. Everyone has skills and qualities to offer which should be celebrated and shared.

Emphasis on community can reduce instances of isolation and in turn benefit some of those suffering in our community. Greater focus on community may also encourage respect between different cultures to reduce instances of prejudice, racism and social conflict.

SHE LEADS IN-CONVERSATION SERIES

At YWCA Canberra we know that developing women's leadership is fundamental to advancing gender equality. Our She Leads Program is designed to inspire, educate and connect aspiring and established women leaders. In 2016, more than 450 women engaged with at least one aspect of the She Leads Program.

The She Leads In-Conversation Series is the latest addition to the She Leads suite. These quarterly evening events will provide Canberrans with the opportunity to hear from women leaders in a conversational format, followed by a live Q&A session, book signing, and networking.

If you've been to any of our She Leads events in the past, you'll know that we put on a great show. If you haven't been to a She Leads event, the In-Conversation series is the perfect way to start your She Leads journey!

We will be announcing our February speaker and launching ticket sales on January 5, so stay tuned.

Follow @SheLeadsCBR on Twitter and Facebook to keep up to date on our events and announcements.

She Leads events are made possible by the generous support of our partners. We would like to thank the University of Canberra (Principal Partner), Hays (She Leads Champion), and HESTA (She Leads Champion), for supporting the She Leads In-Conversation event.

UC PARTNERSHIP

At YWCA Canberra, we are fortunate to have built strong partnerships with organisations that support us in a range of ways. The University of Canberra (UC) has supported the She Leads College Conference since 2015 as Venue Partner. In 2017, UC will once again support the College Conference and is the Principal Partner for our brand new She Leads In-Conversation Series. We had a chat to UC about all things gender equality, and why they have chosen to support the She Leads Program.

Why is supporting women's leadership important to the team at UC?

UC has a strong commitment to equity, diversity and social justice through our actions as stated in our Breakthrough Strategic Plan: 2013- 2017 and our Charter of Conduct and Values.

It is important that we hear all voices represented at all levels of the organisation; women bring a valuable perspective to create, plan, solve problems, grow and improve collaboration, which are critical to a healthy organisation. Women's leadership nurture this balance. At UC, we recognise our colleagues' professional

Who inspires you?

I come from a family with a lot of strong and inspiring women. I joke that I grew up with five mothers: my mum, my grandmother and three aunts. Having such strong female role models in my life really inspired me to achieve my goals and push the boundaries.

My grandmother was unable to complete her schooling, so she encouraged all her grandchildren, and in particular her granddaughters, to take all opportunities and to be grateful for the opportunities presented to them.

My mum went back and studied law as her second degree when her kids were in high school. I was raised to believe that I can achieve my goals by working hard and having focus.



SheLeads In-Conversation



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

HAYS

Recruiting experts
worldwide

HESTA



An Industry
SuperFund

contribution regardless of gender, but we are proud of the gains we have made in closing the gender gap at all levels of the institution.

Only last week, UC was recognised for the 10th year in a row as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). The 2014-2015 WGEA Gender Equality benchmark report also demonstrates that the gender composition of our workforce continues to maintain a significant advantage over its comparison group. This is something we are proud of.

What drew UC to supporting the She Leads Program?

Well, the She Leads Program is YWCA Canberra's leadership pathway for women who are looking to explore and develop their leadership potential, equipping the next generation of women leaders with the skills they need to further their potential, and we agree wholeheartedly with this initiative.

Our vision statement declares that "our behaviours, internally and as an institution, will continue to reflect the principle that as a community we should be an

exemplar of the way that societies around us must act if the world is to be a just place..." UC sees the She Leads Program as an important program to enable this vision.

You were our venue partner for our inaugural She Leads College Conference in 2015, and again in 2016 - what has been the highlight of that experience for UC?

Hosting the She Leads Conference on our campus has been a great opportunity for UC staff to interact with a diverse range of young women sharing their personal leadership experiences, whilst bringing a unique perspective

to the discussion of women's leadership. Our staff, particularly our academics, have cherished the experience of talking to and listening to young women address their views, challenges and ideas around the role women play in shaping our communities.

What is UC doing internally to support women in leadership and work towards achieving gender equality?

Building on its long-time recognition as an Employer of Choice, UC endeavours to recognise gender equity as a societal issue, and a workplace matter to be addressed. UC's challenge is to build on our success, and we aim to do so by focusing on:

- Recruitment & retention
- Leadership development
- Achieving and maintaining relevant accreditations
- Academic promotion rates, with a focus on STEMM
- Creating an appropriate work environment
- Improving and maintaining our sector-leading flexible and family friendly conditions of employment

What are some of the benefits of working or studying at UC, specifically for women?

There are a number of benefits for women working or studying at UC, including flexible working arrangements, various forms of parental leave, and family-friendly conditions support a thriving environment for women at work. Additionally, UC does a number of outreach programs that support gender balance through focused programs in Maths and Science.

More importantly, as an institution, our commitment to gender equity and our stance on the prevention of violence against women set us apart. As mentioned before, we have been named Employer of Choice for Gender Equity for 10 years in a row and we have operated as a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace for three years.

UC also recognises the importance of breastfeeding for both carers and babies and provides a supportive environment for breastfeeding staff and students.

What are some things that are coming up for UC in 2017 that you're excited about?

There are many exciting programs that the University is currently either implementing or about to implement.

For example, to continue to boost the gender composition at management levels, UC's Talent



Management team has shifted its gender focus to leadership programs targeting this cohort of employees, with women's participation targets.

The two flagship programs aimed at current and aspiring professional and academic managers are the Management Essentials and Emerging Leaders courses which have a gender target of more than 50 per cent women attendees.

In order to progress promotion rates for women and avoid disadvantage for our female academics who might have taken career breaks due to parental

leave or caring responsibilities, UC has committed to the introduction of targeted coaching, mentoring and support for associate professors on the path to professorial appointments.

And another exciting example is our participation in the pilot project of the Athena Swan Charter & the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Initiative to help look at all policies, practices and culture in the institution, with the aim of then launching a series of special initiatives to strengthen gender balance, particularly in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

She Leads In-Conversation - February 22

**Great Ydeas Small Grants applications open
- February 20**

She Leads College Conference - March 21

**YWCA Canberra's Business Breakfast
- April 27**

She Leads In-Conversation - May 10

She Leads Conference - June 1

SHE LEADS WORKSHOPS
**February 28: Introduction to developing a
social enterprise**
(facilitated by Cindy Reese Mitchell)

March 28: Get your voice heard
(facilitated by Lightbulb Improv)

April 11: Board finance
(facilitated by Betty Ferguson)



AUNTIE JANNETTE - RAP LAUNCH 2016



RAP LAUNCH 2016



DARK ROSE - RAP LAUNCH 2016



MEMBERS' DRINKS 2016



MEMBERS' DRINKS 2016



MEMBERS' DRINKS 2016



HOLIDAY HAMPERS 2016



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16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM MORNING TEA 2016