



THIS ISSUE

Executive Director & President's Report2

ACT Election Advocacy Platform.....3

National Y News4

Reconciliation Action Plan.....5

Meet the Housing Support Unit6

Education and Training8

Family Day Care10

Youth Engagement11

She Leads 201612

Partner Profile: Rowdy Digital13

Events.....14

YWCA-CANBERRA.ORG.AU



**YWCA
CANBERRA**



**WELCOME TO
YNEWS
EDITION ONE 2016**

IN THIS EDITION OF YNEWS:

YWCA Canberra's a big place! Along with the crucial new happenings, in this issue we try to take you on a whirlwind trip around the organisation. Take a deep breath! The work we do here has many faces.

WELCOME TO YNEWS

YNEWS. YWCA CANBERRA. EDITION ONE 2016

YWCA CANBERRA EDITION ONE 2016



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Already, 2016 is proving to be full of new, exciting opportunities. In March, we launched our 2016 election platform, *Every woman, every child, every day*, making 20 key recommendations for action to the incoming ACT Government, to ensure that Canberra is a fair, equitable city with community inclusion for all. We will be continuing to advocate for the asks in the election platform and we encourage you to join us. Find out how to get involved on our website.

A key focus in the platform, and in our ongoing work, is providing women with opportunities in leadership. We're excited to be hosting the annual She Leads Conference on 16 and 17 May this year at QT Canberra. Our line-up includes women from a range of fields, demonstrating the diversity of leadership identities. The theme is 'Transform', and we're looking forward to hearing how our speakers have transformed their workplaces, communities and lives.

We have recently closed applications for our Great Ideas Small Grants Program, and were excited to be able to offer an additional \$6000 in funding through partnerships with NAB, Australian Catholic Superannuation and EY. We're announcing the recipients on Wednesday 27 April at our annual Round the World Breakfast at QT Canberra. This year the breakfast will be raising funds for our Computer Clubhouse, providing pathways for young people into science, technology, mathematics and engineering. Make sure to grab a ticket!

As always, we have numerous other exciting events and opportunities coming up, and many highlights to share from our work in the community through children's services, education and training, community development and youth engagement. I hope you enjoy reading the updates in this edition of Ynews.

Kind regards,
Frances Crimmins



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome, everyone, to another year at YWCA Canberra, and a particularly important year as we continue to progress the national sustainability project, ensuring we move into the future with the best possible YWCA movement in Australia. Over the course of the coming months, YWCAs across Australia will be working together to review our current operational structures, and develop a new way of working together moving forward.

This year, I will be using this space to update our members and stakeholders on the progress of this project. To date, three key working groups have been formed to explore how to better work together at the national level. The groups are examining our Housing, She Speaks and Respectful Relationships projects and programs in light of current collective work

underway and opportunities for national collaboration. I am also looking forward to taking on a greater role with the Communications and Engagement working group to ensure you have a say in the direction of the project. We are working closely with consultants McKinsey to develop the business cases and options for how the YWCA could look into the future.

This has been an interesting, engaging and positive process and I have been able to take away some useful insights about the other Y's around Australia. The YWCA Canberra Board and I are looking forward to keeping you updated through the coming months, and sharing this journey with you all.

Kind regards,
Kate Chipperfield

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.

ELECTION 2016

YWCA PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE

YWCA CANBERRA CALLS FOR EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

In YWCA Canberra's 87-year history, we have seen Canberra grow to become a progressive, inclusive city. But Canberra's economic and social prosperity masks significant inequities that affect vulnerable members of our community and prevent the benefits of this great Territory from reaching all Canberrans.

On Tuesday 22 March, we launched our election advocacy platform, *Every woman, every child, every day*, outlining 20 key recommendations focused on three priority areas, which we are calling on the next ACT Government to action.

First, it is crucial that children and young people are given the best possible chance of succeeding as educated, healthy, contributing members of our community. This can only be achieved through the provision of quality early childhood education, support for at-risk and vulnerable young people, and a focus on ensuring that young people are provided with pathways into the careers of tomorrow.

The ACT Government has a vital role to play in ensuring all our children and young people - particularly those who are most vulnerable or at risk - have the safety, support and sense of belonging they need to learn, work, engage and have a voice in our community.

Second, for Canberra to truly be a progressive community, we must address the ongoing issue of gender inequality, which prevents women from participating fully economically, and is inextricably linked to the growing issue of violence against women.

Without adequate support for women fleeing domestic violence, the cycle of violence and abuse can never be truly broken. Gender inequality must also be addressed in terms of women in leadership; the ACT Government has an important role to play in embedding gender equality into all policies, workplaces, and procurement processes.

In this election year, those seeking office must commit to ensuring that there are affordable and appropriate

housing solutions for women of all ages, as well as gender-responsive crisis accommodation for survivors of domestic violence.

Finally, community inclusion is a critical issue in the ACT, where geographic location can have a significant impact on access to services, recreational activities, and more.

Despite enjoying one of the lowest levels of overall disadvantage in Australia, the ACT also has one of the highest proportions of socio-economically diverse neighbourhoods, with large numbers of both the most and the least disadvantaged individuals living side by side.

YWCA Canberra acknowledges that in a tight fiscal environment, the prudent and efficient use of government resources is necessary to maintain a strong economy and sustainable service system. It is imperative, however, that support is maintained and enhanced for those who are most vulnerable.

Consequently, YWCA Canberra looks to the ACT government to support reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to prioritise community inclusion and access in urban design and planning, and to ensure services are accessible to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Every woman, every child, every day is a call to action - we want a commitment from those who seek to lead this city, to ensure that equality, community inclusion, and support for vulnerable members of our community are priorities for the coming three years.

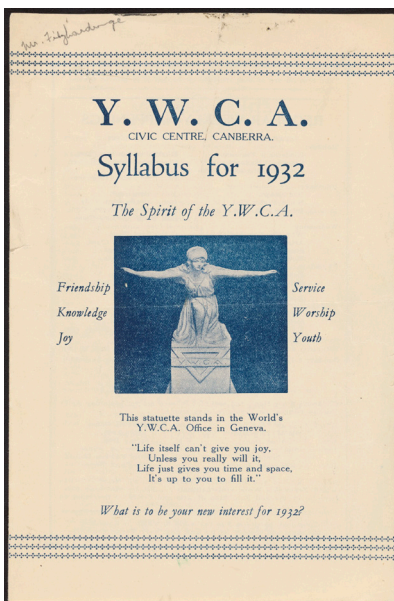
Those seeking to be involved with *Every woman, every child, every day* can do so in three key ways: tweet at local MLAs and candidates using our hashtag, #EveryWoman16, and tagging @YWCACanberra; shoot a 30-second video on your phone telling us what kind of Canberra you want to live in and email it to corporate.services@ywca-canberra.org.au; and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and via our e-newsletter.

For more information, contact Zoya Patel, Senior Manager, Corporate Relations and Communication via email at Zoya.Patel@ywca-canberra.org.au.

NATIONAL YNEWS

The first YWCA in Australia was established in 1872. The time has therefore come to reflect on our shared direction, and to ensure that our movement remains sustainable well into the 21st century.

YWCA's across Australia are currently embarking on a comprehensive process of review through the Sustainability Project, which seeks to answer the question, 'How can the YWCA better achieve gender equality?'



There are eleven YWCA member associations in Australia which operate independently within a federated structure, united by our national association YWCA Australia and the global YWCA movement.

The Sustainability Project is considering new models to ensure that YWCAs in Australia are operating as

effectively as possible to achieve gender equality, particularly in the current context of significant change in the not-for-profit sector. As the interim President of YWCA Australia Nicole Swaine noted, "It is clear that we are at the precipice of a significant change for the YWCAs in Australia."

A Steering Committee has been established and major work streams formed to work on shared projects and consider legal



and financial issues. YWCA Australia is fortunate to have partnered with global management consulting firm McKinsey, who are generously providing pro-bono project and change management advice and support.

YWCA Canberra is also fortunate to be in a very positive position, being financially sustainable thanks to our high-quality programs and strong, engaged membership base. The Sustainability Project is an exciting opportunity for us to work more closely with other YWCAs across Australia, and we anticipate that it will lead to a stronger collective impact from the YWCA movement in Australia.



We will keep YWCA Canberra members up to date on the Sustainability Project, and look forward to sharing updates on this exciting endeavour.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at Canberra@ywca-canberra.org.au.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN: EQUITY 2016

YWCA Canberra's Reconciliation Action Plans have provided a valuable mechanism to develop strong relationships, improve our understanding of the great contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and help us to work together to ensure all members of the community have the same opportunities and experience the same quality of life.

important ongoing conversation between the Nannies and the ACT Care and Protection Service.

More can be achieved by building relationships within our organisation, enabling staff to share their expertise and contacts with colleagues from other areas of the organisation.



After successfully embedding the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we are in the process of implementing a stretch RAP, which enables us to focus on more ambitious targets. During this reporting period, we have set ourselves numerous goals across five key action areas. We have made solid progress in our efforts to build and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders and organisations.

We have continued to build and strengthen our partnership with the ACT Nannies Group, the Gulunga Program and Gugan Gulwan, the Youth Aboriginal Corporation.

On National Apology Day, we were fortunate to be able to partner with the ACT Nannies Group to host a luncheon, with support from a Healing Foundation grant. We were privileged to have all Nannies attend and share their experiences of the Stolen Generation, and the ongoing fear of having their grandchildren taken away - these fears are based on their personal experiences as part of the Stolen Generation and also from having relatives placed within the current care and protection system. This is an

YWCA Canberra will also continue to work on improving its recruitment processes, its retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and its provision of opportunities for career development at YWCA Canberra. After receiving funding from the ACT Government via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Grant, YWCA Canberra will once again run the popular Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership workshop. The focus of the program will be to build the confidence of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in our community, and provide them with a space to do this.

We will also provide them with information and advice that will assist them in their transition from secondary school into tertiary education, employment or other opportunities. The program is a two-day course being held on 9 - 10 May, at the Mura Lanyon Community and Youth Centre.

For further information about the workshop please contact Shernaël Teaurima on 6175 9900 or via email at Shernael.teaurima@ywca-canberra.org.au.

MEET THE HOUSING SUPPORT UNIT



Providing housing for women is in the DNA of the YWCA movement. YWCA Canberra has been offering different forms of accommodation to women since the 1940s, including a Leave House for servicewomen during World War Two and a hostel for young women who moved to Canberra for work. Over the years our housing services have evolved to meet the changing needs of local women and their families, but our commitment to providing it has remained strong throughout. Due to the confidential and sensitive nature of their work, the work of the Housing Support Unit (HSU) often flies under the radar, leaving many unaware of the complex and intensive support they provide. We had a chat with Taryn, Jill, Shirley, Kylie and Erin from the Housing Support team, and learned that housing is just the beginning of what they do.

Give us a snapshot of what Housing Support does, starting at the beginning

All of our clients are referred from First Point, Canberra's first point of contact for people experiencing homelessness. To then be eligible for our properties, they must be families (which includes single parents) with children, or pregnant women. After that there are three streams of support that we provide. First, 'housed' clients live in one of our thirteen transitional housing properties. Second, we do outreach, working with clients to help them find long-term accommodation. This includes providing case management, emotional and practical support and information, and also involves referral and advocacy. Through outreach we help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness access their entitlements, link in to community resources and work towards options for long-term, stable housing. The last part we call 'Post-transitional' support. This is a three-month period of support provided to families that

have transitioned out of our properties into more permanent housing. We work with these clients to make sure that everything continues smoothly, that they're settling in and are familiar with local amenities like medical centres.

Wow. And this doesn't include the work you do looking after our permanent houses or managing the Supportive Tenancy Service?

No! The Y also manages Betty Searle House and the purpose-built Lady Heydon House for mature-aged women. And there's the two Eclipse Apartments the Y purchased that are aimed specifically at housing women on low-to-middle incomes. These programs provide fifteen affordable tenancies for Canberra women. The Supportive Tenancy Service (STS), on the other hand, is a consortium between YWCA Canberra, Belconnen Community Service and Woden Community Service. STS covers the whole of Canberra and provides an essential service to vulnerable people who struggle to obtain and maintain a stable tenancy. Much of the work involves crisis intervention, including liaising with real estate agents, providing support in the Tenancy Tribunal, working intensively to reduce financial stress, dealing with squalor and hoarding, and other issues that can lead to homelessness.

What does an average day look like for you?

There is no average day! It could include case planning, writing recommendations to Housing ACT, assisting a mum to have her child

immunised, helping a father learn to cook, working out a budget, driving around viewing private rental properties, supporting a woman to obtain a Domestic Violence Order, attending a case conference, networking, fitting in various meetings and training, making referrals and following them up. We have a lot of admin work, too, which includes tenancy management, recording statistics and note keeping. It often involves working with other government and community services - for example, we have a 'Centrelink Guru', a wonderful Centrelink outreach worker who gives advice and guidance for our clients. We also liaise very closely with Housing ACT assessing officers and our staff participate in the Multi-Disciplinary Panel.

What leads people to the crisis point where they would require this support?

There are many reasons. People can be affected by illness, domestic violence, losing their job, relationship breakdowns. Unfortunately, domestic violence is probably the most common.



And external environmental factors can also contribute - for example, we noticed people during the global financial crisis were struggling to maintain their homes.

Why is housing so important?

Housing helps everything else fall into place. It's the absolute first thing that you need to sort out for people who are experiencing multiple issues in their lives. It is very difficult to apply for a job or even enrol a child in school without a fixed address. Young children need routine and safe predictable environments. Parents are usually so worried about how they will put a roof over their heads that they simply can't focus on anything else.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

The way that we work has changed hugely over the past three years, since there were significant Federal Government cuts to the sector. We've had to adapt to these changes, which included a loss of staff.

There is now a severe lack of crisis accommodation in the ACT. Rents are unaffordable for most families on Centrelink benefits or low income. The homelessness system experiences blockages due to a lack of long-term accessible housing. Also, building a relationship with the client is really important, but this can be challenging as we're working with people who are experiencing one of the toughest periods of their lives.

What are the qualities required in a housing support worker?

Empathy, that's a big one. Honesty, the ability to multi-task, being adaptable and remaining cool during crisis. Life experience, having an open mind and a sense of humour are also necessary. On a more practical level, professional expertise, a strength-based approach, case management skills, an ability to relate to people from a diverse range of backgrounds and knowing the sector and services available. And lastly - we are all driven by a strong sense of social justice, that's at the core of our work.



How do you support each other?

We are a close team with a caring approach. We are very mindful of each other and have a collaborative approach. For example, in a crisis, the whole team will pull together and set a house up ready for a family to move in while addressing their immediate needs of safety, food and clothing. We meet regularly, sharing information and advice, debriefing with each other and reporting back to the team on any training we've attended. Humour keeps us smiling and sane.

Lastly, what is rewarding about working in housing support?

When we see families settled, enjoying stability and becoming part of a community. We know we have done our job well when families don't need to rely on us anymore. It's also rewarding to see positive outcomes for people who have had some difficult times in their lives. We see our work as vital to keeping some of the most vulnerable families in our community from falling apart.

EDUCATION & TRAINING:

TRAINER PROFILE: JESSICA GARNETT

Jessica Garnett is an experienced educator who's passionate about empowering and encouraging others to achieve their goals and realise their dreams. She works as a Trainer and Assessor in YWCA Canberra's Education and Training team.

Tell us about the courses you teach and the outcomes associated.

The courses I teach include Certificate III in Business Administration, Certificate IV in Frontline Management, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and the Diploma of Leadership and Management, and I often customise courses to meet clients' specific training needs. The outcomes are that students graduate with nationally recognised qualifications, which often lead them to make positive changes in their professional and personal lives.

Take us through a week your life. Where will you be, focused on what, teaching whom?

A week in my life (the parts outside of work) includes focusing on managing our farm and caring for our cattle, caring for and training our rescue horses, dogs and cats, and providing Horse Education and Learning services to those in need. In the other part of the week, at YWCA Canberra, I'll be working either in-house or onsite with a whole range of people: community sector organisations who are developing programs for their staff and networks; government departments rolling out national



training to meet business development program requirements; public servants who are up-skilling to enhance existing skillsets; and individuals seeking additional skills and knowledge to further their employment opportunities.

Often these students are new Australians who have English as a second or third language and require additional support throughout their learning. I'm usually also meeting with internal and external clients including public and private enterprises. This can be to work on strategies for learning and development, training and assessment and sales and marketing, to monitor

Australian Quality Training Framework compliance requirements, to conduct business management

or training needs analysis, to develop training and assessment materials and marketing collateral, or to provide post-training support to ensure return on investment. And all this goes hand-in-hand with meeting some pretty amazing people along the way!

“Even with over ten years' experience I still worry that I won't meet people's expectations”

What are the emotional and physical demands and rewards of teaching the courses?

I get really nervous and don't sleep well before delivering training - even with over ten years' training experience I still worry that I won't meet people's expectations. The physical demands are that I now have Chronic Pain Syndrome from developing RSI years ago from too much keyboard and office work - the perils of training is that there is heaps of admin! But I gain so much from my students. They let me into their worlds and share their skills and knowledge with me, and I'm so privileged to be able to often learn from them. I'm able to share in their excitement and joy when they graduate.

Do you tend to notice changes come over the students as they progress?

Most students are seeking more than just the qualification they gain. They are seeking a mentor, a coach, a confidant. Often they lack the confidence to even attend training, so for them to actually arrive in the classroom can be a massive achievement. I have filled the mentoring-coaching role many times, and I've had the pleasure of witnessing students flourish as they progress through their training to successfully graduating.

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

There are hundreds of hours behind the scenes that we do before we even step into the training room. It all just doesn't happen overnight!

WHY WE DO IT:

STUDENT PROFILE: SAMARA

Samara is a Learning Support educator in the Koori Pre-School Program at Kingsford Smith School in Holt. She began a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care in late 2015 and has no plans to stop learning. We sat down with her to find out about her background, her aspirations, and what training and further education means to her.

Tell us about yourself. What's your background, professionally and personally?

I was a beauty therapist and worked in a salon. I wanted a more stable job so I applied for a position with ACT Community Health. I got the job and had been working there for about four years when I fell pregnant with my first child. On maternity leave I fell pregnant with my second child and did not return to work. I was then a stay-at-home mum. I waited until my children attended school and then applied for various positions until I got one as Learning Support in the Koori Pre-School program at Kingsford Smith School in Holt. I am loving where I work and being able to help children with their education.

Why did you decide to undertake a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care?

After having my children, education became a big part of my life. I have a passion to help educate children and the Certificate enables me to make that passion my career.

What was your experience of the course? Your fellow students, your instructor, your feelings as it progressed?

It was amazing. I love the diversity, learning from different professional and ethnic backgrounds in 20 completely diverse people. The support from everyone is overwhelming.

What do you plan to do with the skills, information and qualification you received?

I plan to stay within the education sector and hope to study further for a



diploma. I just enjoy that the kids are learning, I enjoy watching them grow and seeing how they learn. With a diploma I can run my own courses and have my own students.

Any final thoughts or tips for people thinking about taking the course or one like it?

I would highly recommend this course to anyone wanting to join the education sector. The experience is great, and meeting new people from different backgrounds has been a great experience for me.

“ I just enjoy that the kids are learning. I enjoy watching them grow and seeing how they learn. With a diploma, I can run my own courses and have my own students ”

FAMILY DAY CARE

OFFICER PROFILE: JILLIAN THOMPSON

Jillian Thompson is the Administration Officer for YWCA Canberra's Family Day Care services, a team she's worked in for sixteen years. Here, we tried to get a sense of the breadth and scope of Jillian's role and responsibilities, our Family Day Care services being among the most demanding and important the Y provides.

What makes the YWCA Canberra Family Day Care service unique?

YWCA Family Day Care is an employer-based model - this means we actually employ the educators and provide entitlements that other services may not offer, such as paid parental leave, annual leave and loading, personal leave, superannuation, salary sacrificing and retention bonuses.

Working as closely as you do with every facet of Family Day Care, what do you see as the primary benefit of the YWCA Canberra Family Day Care service?

YWCA Family Day Care provides families the opportunity to pursue employment and training or access respite care with the knowledge that their children are being cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. Children benefit by being cared for in a family setting - learning many basic skills that busy families may not necessarily practice due to time constraints.

How big is the service and how do its parts fit together?

YWCA Family Day Care services the Belconnen, Gungahlin and Inner North areas of Canberra, employing 40 educators and caring for 228 children from 164 families. Carers provide quality care in their homes under the guidance and support of our coordination unit. Educators are required to have a Certificate III in Child Care or be currently studying to obtain a Certificate III, and some educators have a diploma in Child Care or higher levels of education. Educators are required to provide a program for children which is interest and age-appropriate. And clients vary - parents may be employed, studying, pursuing an interest or needing respite due to physical or mental illness.

Run us through a week in the life, from Coordination Unit and coordinators through to carers and their clients.

Where do I start? My job is very hectic and at times very challenging - no sitting around reading glossy magazines or popping out for a few foils at the local salon. On a more serious note, primarily my role is to manage the office while providing information and support to families, educators and the quality



support officers (or coordination unit). A typical week could entail processing a pay run (which takes three days to process), performing data entry (e.g. updating parents' details), processing applications, answering one million and one phone calls and emails, organising backup care if educators are sick, tracking leave and retention bonuses,

and collating information for statistical purposes. Wow, I'm exhausted already!

What drew you to this work? What do you love about it?

Initially I applied for the position as I had moved to Canberra and was unemployed and needed to pay the rent. I got the job and the rest is history. Now I love the fast-paced environment that I work in - working with families, children and educators means there is never a dull moment, and it reinforces what I learnt studying a Certificate III in Child Care. Each day brings challenges and rewards.

And lastly, what's something you wish people knew about your job or the work that you do?

My work is more than providing care for children. Providing friendship and support to many female educators for whom English is an additional language gives those women the confidence to further their personal development while being gainfully employed - it is very rewarding for me to be part of this process.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

OFFICER PROFILE: ANNIE-LEA PATERSEN

Many of the services provided by YWCA Canberra are remote to the Central Office in Civic, none more so than the Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre. The work taking place there, however, is every bit as important. To get an idea of what really goes on down there, we spoke with Annie-Lea Paterson, a Youth Engagement Officer.

Tell us about yourself. Why this job?

I have always been passionate about working in a helping profession. Although having graduated at the University of Canberra with a double degree in Education and Arts, I have always been drawn to counselling and youth work, which YWCA Canberra have always supported and nurtured. Alongside this passion is music and travelling, I have trekked to the base camp of Mt Annapurna in Nepal, travelled around Europe and the UK for four months, and will soon head to Thailand for my honeymoon. I have really enjoyed working with YWCA for the past five years and am excited about what the future will bring.

Tell us about the space. What's it like sharing that space with the financial counselling, young mums, food hub and other services? How does it all fit together?

The Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre is an amazing hub for the community to gather, connect, and access services. The centre has many rooms, including a community hall which can be hired out, allowing for several groups to meet including Young Mums, Heart Moves, Ukulele lessons, Tae Kwon Do, Seniors ACT, ACT Indigenous Nannies, Care Financial, ACT Young Carers group and many more. Our dedicated volunteers manage the Food Hub for people within the Tuggeranong community who require emergency food relief. The Youth Engagement team, Circles of Support counselling services, the Supportive Tenancy Service, and the Child Youth and Family Gateway all operate within the Centre and I feel lucky to work in a space that offers so much opportunity and support to the community.

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

As a Youth Engagement Officer my role is very diverse. In a typical week I am likely to lead a couple of sessions of personal development programs within schools. The two I am currently facilitating is Every Girl and Y-Aspire, these are both girls groups which focus on topics aimed at raising self-esteem, leadership, and resilience. I help facilitate the open drop-in at our Youth Centre and the Sexuality and Gender

Diverse group called A-Z. Throughout the week I also spend time promoting our services in schools, meeting with clients for individual case work which also includes communicating with relevant services. At the moment we are working towards Youth Week and the upcoming school holiday program!



What drew you to this work? What do you love about it?

Having studied teaching, I was always interested in working with young people and being a positive influence in their lives. While on professional placements it soon became clear that my passion and enthusiasm came through in the pastoral care aspect of teaching. Knowing that my passion was not in classroom teaching but work with a more social-emotional focus, I finished my double degrees, however pursued employment in youth work.

What do you see as the primary benefits of your work?

The most rewarding aspect of my role is seeing the personal development in the young people I work with and seeing them work towards their goals. Leaving the working day knowing that you have made a difference, no matter how big or small is so rewarding and although it can be confronting work, the benefits bring me back every day.

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

As a Youth Engagement Officer, my role is to help support young people with their mental health, wellbeing, education, and avenues towards employment. I aim to make meaningful relationships with young people with a strengths-based approach to support them with their identified needs.

SHE LEADS 2016: CLARE CONROY

Clare Conroy is the Leadership Programs Manager at YWCA Canberra, and a self-confessed 'leadership nerd'. We chat to her about the She Leads program and how we can support women to reach leadership positions.

Tell us about the She Leads program. How does it fit in with other work that the Y does?

She Leads is a professional development program for current and emerging women leaders. It includes the She Leads Diploma of Leadership and Management, the She Leads Conference and College Conference, and the She Leads Workshops. YWCA Canberra has a long history of advocating for workplace gender equality and increased representation of women in leadership, and the She Leads Program is designed to practically support these goals. Our broader women's leadership pathway includes Every Girl (for 9 to 14-year-old girls) and Y-Aspire (for girls in Years 7 and 8).

What first piqued your passion for women's leadership?

Personally, I've long had an interest in supporting the professional development of women that I work with - for example, mentoring and coaching staff and organising networking opportunities for women. I'm also a bit of a leadership/business nerd - I always have a stack of management and self-improvement books in my reading pile! As the former Executive Producer of TEDxCanberra and TEDxCanberraWomen, my thinking on a range of topics has been influenced and shaped by TED talks, including by women in leadership - two of my favourites are from Sheryl Sandberg and Madeline Albright.

Why is women's leadership still important in 2016?

For so many reasons! Women are still under-represented in formal leadership positions. Women occupy only 26.7% of seats in the federal House of Representatives and there are more men named Peter in the Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair positions of companies in the ASX200 than there are women. But our focus on women's leadership is not only on formal leadership positions. We also support women to be leaders in their homes, communities and workplaces, and understand that you can lead from in front, beside and behind. Supporting women's leadership is all about valuing and using the talents and potential of women. When we do, that benefits all of society.

What sets She Leads apart from other leadership programs?

One of the things is its broad view of leadership. We also think it's important to challenge leadership stereotypes, so we ensure

that there is diversity in the backgrounds and experiences of women on the She Leads Conference line-up, and in the panelists at our Diploma sessions. Our program is underpinned by best practice, and contemporary leadership and management theory and techniques, but it also offers an opportunity to consider these topics through a gender lens.

We've found that tailored programs for women tend to create spaces and experiences that are safe for women to have hard conversations, and be vulnerable.

What is most rewarding about the role?

I regularly wake up on Diploma class days feeling grateful (and somewhat amazed) that I get to spend the day with smart, engaged women, supporting them to develop as leaders. It is incredibly rewarding to receive feedback about how She Leads has challenged participants' thinking, built their confidence and inspired them to make changes or take on new challenges. I love hearing about former students or conference attendees who've been successful in obtaining promotions, making the leap to new careers or taking on community leadership positions. It's also pretty fantastic to have a professional excuse to connect with so many women leaders I admire!

What can we expect to see from She Leads in 2016?

We have big plans for this year! We have two new Diploma intakes in April, the She Leads Conference on 16 and 17 May, and the College Conference will run for its second year in August. We're also expanding our workshop series to provide a broader range of regular, affordable, professional development for members. This year we've already had two great workshops - 'Leader as Coach' and 'Managing Difficult Conversations' - and more are in the pipeline. We're also developing a workshop series to support senior executives and human resources managers in implementing programs and strategies to improve gender equality in their organisations.



ROWDY DIGITAL: A PARTNER & INSPIRATION



At YWCA Canberra, we are fortunate to have built strong partnerships with organisations that support us with their expertise. Rowdy Digital, formerly 'Goosebumps', is the Creative Partner of the 2016 She Leads Conference, and is responsible for the branding and design of a number of YWCA Canberra projects, including Relationship Things Online, the redesign of the Relationship Things

program and Respect, Communicate, Choose, and the She Leads Program. Here we chat to Managing Director Jess Salvage about their origins, ethical philosophy and ongoing goals.

What was it like to become a businesswoman at the age of 22?

When I first got into business I was young and very fresh, but I was fortunate to have a great business partner and some fantastic clients, so my confidence quickly grew. I'm not particularly tall which made me look even younger than I was! That did cause some concerns with some clients at first. But I'd usually prove myself pretty quickly and they took me seriously after that! We currently have a young trainee at Rowdy, and it's great to see someone else following a similar path to myself, and developing her skills in a supportive and dynamic environment.

Tell us about what you do at Rowdy Digital.

We are a digital agency with five staff, who focus on design, strategy and development. In addition, we bring in external specialists to help our clients achieve their communications and marketing objectives as needed. Rowdy was co-founded by three owners - myself, Judy Waters and Llewella Jago. Three women at the helm is certainly unique in our industry and we all bring a lot of diverse experience. We aim to be collaborative with our clients. We don't live and breathe their business like they do - so while we are the experts on what we do, we work to find the solution that works for them as well as us. Most importantly, we deliver high-quality work for our clients with flexibility, a great attitude and a lot of passion.

“In a nutshell, it's about wanting to do good things”

And what about the rebrand, from Goosebumps to Rowdy?

We felt that Rowdy Digital was the

perfect fit for what we do! We decided that it was time to rebrand to reflect new ownership and put our stamp on the business, but we also wanted a name that better reflected the work that we do and our way of doing things. Our approach is to do everything with a digital-first mentality: We still do branding, we still do print and campaign work, but we start with digital and consider its impact on every project we do. We're really excited to hit the market later in April with our full service offering.

Tell us about the ethical philosophy that drives Rowdy?

In a nutshell, it's about wanting to do good things. I've worked in the industry for nearly 20 years on a huge range of interesting projects, but what I particularly enjoy is when we can use our skills to help clients (particularly in the not-for-profit sector) to do their jobs well and make their organisations successful.

What are some projects you've finished or are hoping to take on?

We've recently done some great work with UN Women, Karinya House, Post and Ante Natal Depression Support and Information Inc (PANDSI) as well as our ongoing work with the YWCA. Through commonalities like this we're looking to create communities of like-minded people. For example, a lot of the not-for-profits that we've worked with focus on women - we hope that through working with them we can create connections between their organisations so that they can benefit from each other. We're also looking into how we can support these organisations with the development of business systems in an affordable and scalable manner - so watch this space! We love what we do, and we love that we get to contribute to our community in our own way!

Check out Rowdy Digital's work at getgoosebumps.com.au and relationshipthings.com.au.

rowdydigital

EVENTS



ROUND THE WORLD BREAKFAST

The Round the World Breakfast event provides an opportunity for YWCAs to come together to honour the contributions of women leaders in their communities. Held to coincide with World YWCA Day, the breakfast at QT Canberra features CBR Innovation Network CEO Dr Sarah Pearson as the keynote speaker. The event is raising funds for the YWCA Canberra Clubhouse, an innovative out-of-school program that provides young people from under-served communities access to skills building and career pathways into science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. The recipients of our 2016 Great Ideas Small Grants will also be announced.

When: 7am, Wednesday 27 April 2016

Where: QT Hotel Canberra, Acton, ACT

Cost: \$65 (members), \$75 (non-members) or \$700 Corporate Table

Register on our website.



SHE LEADS FINANCE WORKSHOP

She Leads Workshops form part of our women's leadership pathway, and provide members with the opportunity to hone their leadership skills through targeted professional. The Finance She Leads Workshop gives women an overview of reading financial reports and statements and understanding the different elements, risks and internal controls. Betty Ferguson, who will be running the workshop, is renowned for "making finance fun", particularly for people who don't have an accounting or finance background!

When: 5pm, Tuesday 3 May 2016

Where: Level 3, YWCA Canberra, 71 Northbourne Ave, Civic

Cost: \$35 (members) or \$50 (non-members)

Register on our website.



2016 SHE LEADS MASTERCLASSES

Four professional development masterclasses are available, addressing time management, mindful leadership, work-life balance and career transition. Visit 2016.sheleads.org.au for more information and to register.

When: Monday 16 May 2016

Where: QT Hotel Canberra, Acton, ACT

Cost: See website.

Register at 2016.sheleads.org.au

2016 ANNUAL SHE LEADS CONFERENCE

Hosted by Jane Caro, the She Leads Conference brings women from a range of sectors, at all stages of their leadership journeys, together with Australia's most inspiring women leaders. The She Leads Conference format combines education and skills development, an abundance of networking opportunities, and a mix of stimulating talks and hands-on workshops with renowned women leaders. An exciting component of the program is a full day of optional Masterclasses, facilitated by expert trainers.

When: Tuesday 17 May 2016

Where: QT Hotel Canberra, Acton

Cost: See website.

Register at 2016.sheleads.org.au



STRATEGIC & BUSINESS PLANNING BOOTCAMP

The Strategic and Business Planning Bootcamp will provide for purpose professionals with the knowledge and skills to develop a strategic plan, an accompanying business or operational plan and how to measure success. At the end of the Bootcamp participants will have an improved understanding of strategic and business planning best practice for organisations. The Bootcamp is hosted by Tim Arnold, a business coach, facilitator and sports manager, and Brendan Lynch, a consultant in the sports industry specialising in strategic planning, governance reform, organisational development, change management and workforce planning.

When: Friday 8 July 2016

Where: YWCA Canberra, 71 Northbourne Ave, Civic

Cost: \$199

Register on our website.



STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION BOOTCAMP

The Strategic Communication Bootcamp will provide for purpose professionals with the opportunity to develop critical skills to build their organisation's profile, raise funds, influence decision-makers, and communicate key messages. At the end of the Bootcamp participants will have the essential tools and resources needed to approach their organisation's communications activities strategically and efficiently. The Bootcamp is hosted by Joanna Le, a communications professional with over ten years experience in digital media production and strategic communication in both the private and for purpose sectors. Joanna is the Director of Corporate Relations and Communications at YWCA Canberra, and was formerly the Manager of Communication at the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education.

When: Friday 30 September 2016

Where: YWCA Canberra, 71 Northbourne Ave, Civic

Cost: \$199

Register on our website.

To stay up to date with further events from YWCA Canberra, sign up to our email newsletter by visiting our website: ywca-canberra.org.au.

EVERY WOMAN, EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY

ON TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2016 IN FRONT OF THE ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, YWCA CANBERRA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FRANCES CRIMMINS LAUNCHED OUR ELECTION ADVOCACY PLATFORM, CALLING FOR GENDER EQUALITY, SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION.

