

Taking the Lead

Youth Leadership programs are a great way for young people to get involved in the community. At the Y, we aim to inspire everybody with leadership attitudes and give young leaders the opportunities to build personal abilities.

Junior Leaders is run in Vacation Care programs at Arncliffe, Bankstown and Epping. It focuses on older children in the vital years between 11-14 years of age who are starting to figure out who they are and what they believe in. It is a great time to build responsibility, confidence, public speaking, organisation and teamwork. Every day new skills are learned which is then utilised, assisting staff at Vacation Care to mentor younger children. Junior Leaders learn to step up, speak up, show the way and think "team."

A similar program runs at Mt Annan with members of our Teen Gym program becoming Junior Fitness Leaders and Junior Aquatics Leaders. These 12-15 year olds learn by observation and training and assist instructors in the gym or pool to run fitness, swimming or squad training classes.

At Camp Yarramundi, the Junior Leaders range from 14-17 year olds who come from seriously disadvantaged backgrounds and who are in the care of the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS). Through a series of intensive camps over the course of 18 months, they are trained in leadership skills, group management and facilitation, first aid, budget management, roping and adventure activity skills, bushwalking and canoeing competencies. Participants are

concurrently also participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award which in itself will be a huge accomplishment. They then become Junior Leaders to our younger campers at holiday camps providing positive role models.

All of our young leaders learn life skills and benefit from gaining work experience which qualify them for employment and career progression.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of: Bankstown City Council for the Bankstown Y's Junior Leaders program; Coca Cola Australia Foundation, Trust Company Ltd, & ANZ Staff Foundation for various components of Camp Yarramundi's *Changing Minds, Bouncing Back* program.



Junior Leaders, Bankstown

YMCA Community Strengthening

A Personal Account

Coby Halpin, Centre Manager, Raymond Terrace Leisure Centre
Reconnecting People, Families and Communities

In July 2008, our gymnastics family was rocked by the passing of one of our long term mothers after a long and hard fought battle with a brain tumour. Her 14 year old daughter had been part of our gymnastics squad for a number of years, and was affected immensely; withdrawing from her friends at the Y, her family and community.



In an effort to offer some respite and reengage her, RTLIC paid for her to attend the YMCA's Marland Cup; a fun and challenging annual youth event. Not only did she have a ball but also rediscovering some of her self confidence and passion for life. After coming home, things started settling down and she has now fully committed to her gymnastics program even earning an Award at the Annual Gymnastics Presentations for the club.

YMCA of Sydney Board Recruitment

Can You Support the Y With Your Time, Talent or Treasure?

The YMCA is experiencing an exciting period of growth and for this reason we are currently seeking to recruit Directors to the YMCA of Sydney Board to guide and support us towards a very optimistic future. We are specifically seeking to recruit Directors who are well connected with strong professional networks and who bring specialist skills in law, industrial relations, HR, marketing and PR, finance, social services and strategic IT.

If you can support the Y through your professional networks and expertise please contact Andrew Paterson via email andrew.paterson@ymca.org.au or by phone on 0409 901 551.

YMCA of Sydney

Level 5, 91 George Street Parramatta NSW 2150. www.sydney.ymca.org.au
Contact: Anju Shrestha, Phone 9633 8212, anju.shrestha@ymca.org



We build strong **PEOPLE**
strong **FAMILIES** strong **COMMUNITIES**



Y's Friends

The newsletter for alumni & friend's of the YMCA

Summer 2008



YMCA

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Highlights of 2008 Message from the CEO

There is no doubt that a small group of people can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has. Margaret Mead

In the lead up to Christmas and in looking back on a big year I feel that this quote is really pertinent. It's the small things at Christmas time that make it special; the time spent with family and friends or the small but thoughtful gifts that mean the most.

Similarly, when we look back over not only 2008, but the Y's eventful history, it is small groups of people and the actions they took that have made us who we are today. In looking ahead to 2009 I urge you all to embrace the notion that it is the collective contributions of us all as individuals that will determine what the Y will be in the future.

This year has been a terrific year with great news to share. Here is a brief review of our achievements for 2008.

Program Highlights

- ◆ Redeveloped Kinder Gym
- ◆ 2008 Youth Parliament
- ◆ The 4 step induction process for health & fitness

Development Highlights

- ◆ Cook & Phillip Park Aquatic & Fitness Centre
- ◆ National Indigenous Development Centre
- ◆ Cooma Festival Pool
- ◆ OSHC—Dural Vacation Care, Kellyville Vacation Care, Neutral Bay Vacation Care, Busby West Before & After School Care, & Condell Park OSHC

Facilities Highlights

- ◆ Camp Yarramundi accommodation upgrade
- ◆ Caringbah health & fitness upgrade

Equally exciting were a number of internal changes in systems and processes to ensure that our growth is successful and sustainable.

The achievements of this year are only possible as a result of the hard and dedicated work of our staff and your critical support. Thank you.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Phillip Hare

YMCA Community Strengthening

Program Profile

Siblings Reunite Program Reconnecting Families

Foster children live in an uncertain world; often separated from their siblings they lack stability, identity and confidence in their future. The YMCA's Siblings Re-unite Program brings Foster Care siblings together at Camp Yarramundi to reconnect, strengthen relationships and offer hope for a better future.

"It's uplifting to be a part of providing this brief window of joy but the end of every camp can be a little heart-breaking, I wish we could do more."



National Indigenous Development Centre

James Ellender, Centre Manager, National Indigenous Development Centre

We have entered an exciting partnership with the Indigenous Lands Corporation (ILC) to manage the new National Indigenous Development Centre (NIDC) due to open in August 2009. The facility will become Australia's state of the art indigenous community hub for culture, sport, art and education.

The NIDC is being constructed at the Redfern Primary School site in George Street. Covering an area of 1.63 hectares, it will consist of two centres:

1. George Street Sports & Fitness Centre, and
2. Sydney Urban Camp

The George Street Sports & Fitness Centre will provide recreation, sport, aquatics, childcare and youth services. The Sydney Urban Camp will have 112 bed accommodation, conference room and an education centre.

The NIDC will cater to both indigenous and non indigenous individuals, sporting teams, schools

and tour groups from across Australia and will be run in partnership with several organisations.

Some of the key players are:

- ◆ The National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Association and the Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team who will provide life development and leadership programs for indigenous students
- ◆ The Exodus Foundation will establish an intensive literacy tutorial centre for indigenous students
- ◆ The YMCA of Sydney will apply action packed experiences and ensure full access and participation in our complete range of programs through our fee assistance policy

For further information visit www.ymcasydney.org/nidc

Or contact James Ellender: james.ellender@ymca.org.au, Mob 0413 888 491

The NIDC at a Glance

- ◆ Open to all—indigenous and non indigenous local and general communities
- ◆ Important community asset for civic use by all residents in the Redfern–Waterloo area
- ◆ Provide a holistic approach to indigenous disadvantage
- ◆ Long term social, educational and cultural benefits for Indigenous people
- ◆ Employment and training opportunities for indigenous people

Key target areas are:

- ◆ Child & Youth Services
- ◆ Youth Education
- ◆ Culture & Art
- ◆ Accommodation
- ◆ Camping
- ◆ Aquatics
- ◆ Fitness
- ◆ Sports

Artist's impression of the NIDC



Meet Joe Dawson

Len Newman, Executive Officer, YMCA of Great Lakes



I am proud of the YMCA and all we stand for, it makes me feel empowered to be part of such a diverse and community focused organization. The Y has been instrumental in allowing me to truly grow in Body Mind and Spirit

"Kokoda is a story of great efforts where a handful of inexperienced Australian heroes defended their homeland against a seasoned army that significantly outnumbered them. And ... they won. Imperial Japan was turned on its heels and eventually

driven back across the Pacific."

Author Peter FitzSimons' recent best seller *Kokoda* is history retold through the eyes of those who fought the battle. Amongst others, the book is based on celebrated Kokoda Track Veteran Joe Dawson's fascinating account.

Joe is a vibrant and dynamic facility user at the YMCA of Great Lakes in Forster. Seventeen years ago we had the good fortune of attracting this amazing man to the Y Family. Joe was born 86 years ago in Melbourne. When the war broke out in September 1939 he went to join up but lied about his age saying he was 18. In the army he served in the famous 39th Battalion militia unit. He was assigned to B Company who were the first to meet the Japanese invaders in Gona, Papua New Guinea.

After the gruelling war years Joe decided to pursue a career in retail and he loved the many challenges this work provided him. Joe moved regularly between Victoria, NSW and Queensland, and slowly his passion for assisting the community began to develop. He got involved with Rotary, Hospital Boards, RSL Clubs, and Legacy.

Joe retired in 1982 and settled in Forster in NSW and it was only a few years later that the Great Lakes Aquatic Centre was built and the YMCA was awarded the management contract. Joe was always keen on a healthy and fit lifestyle and so he joined as a fitness member as soon as the doors opened. That was 17 years ago. In 1991 Joe was nominated to the Y Board and has been there ever since.

Joe is an inspiration for all who meet him and brings great experience and wisdom to our little YMCA. We all admire his strength and commitment and our YMCA is truly a much better place for having Joe Dawson around. He epitomises what the Y is all about—strong PEOPLE, strong FAMILIES and strong COMMUNITIES.

Message Board Seeking Old Friends

Peter Barber is seeking information about old friends **Harold T King** and **Ray Galloway**.

Harold had a senior role based at the old Pitt St YMCA in Sydney and was in charge of army personnel. Ray served with a YMCA Unit in Bougainville.

It would be much appreciated if you could contact us with any information.

POST YOUR OWN MESSAGE

Young or old, you are invited to post a message here. Find a friend from Youth Parliament or an old friend from way back. Just contact us with the details.

Share Your Story?

As friends of the YMCA of Sydney, you are invited to share your story. Alumni consistently tell us that the Y impacted profoundly on their lives. We'd love to hear about your experience and share it with other members of our alumni, young and old.

Tell us, what was the Y like for you? Did it make a difference in your life? How has it helped you to get where you are today?

Your story will inspire others and reassure our older Alumni members that the Y remains a place where young people can be the best that they can be. To share your story, simply reply to this email or mail it to me. The best stories will be featured in the next alumni newsletter. I look forward to hearing from you.

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