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**WELCOME TO
YNEWS
4TH EDITION 2015**

IN THIS EDITION OF YNEWS WE EXPLORE:

2015 World YWCA Council in Bangkok, celebrating the Computer Clubhouse AV Studio Launch, new Great Ydeas taking off, ACT Anti-Poverty Week and more.

WELCOME TO YNEWS

YWCA CANBERRA **FOURTH EDITION 2015.**



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Welcome to our fourth edition of Ynews for 2015.

In October, YWCA Canberra was proud to take a delegation of members and staff to the 28th World YWCA Council, held in Bangkok, Thailand. World Council brought together 500 delegates from YWCAs in 73 countries, for a week of decision making, sharing and collaborating.

Every member of our delegation had the opportunity to contribute to our regional workshops, where we joined with other YWCAs to share knowledge of our programs and resources. For YWCA Canberra, it was wonderful to connect with women working on the frontline all over the world to achieve gender equality, and note that regardless of our different contexts and cultures, we are all working towards a shared vision and facing similar challenges. The true strength of our organisation is at the grassroots, and this

was very apparent to us through World Council.

On a personal level, I was excited to share our *She Leads* journey with our international sisters, and was met with enthusiasm and a desire to trial the program in other countries. With our current Diploma cohort well underway, and enrolments opening soon for the March intake, it was wonderful to see the relevance of this important women's leadership pathway around the world.

At the same time as World Council, YWCA Canberra was taking an active part in Anti-Poverty Week activities here in the ACT. This year we focused on contributing to the green paper, titled '*Safe + Well: Redefining the Housing Affordability Crisis*' which featured voices of representatives from Canberra's community and private sector as a united front on the issues surrounding the ACT housing affordability crisis. Our contribution focused on housing vulnerability for women in the ACT. The link to the paper is included in our Anti-Poverty Week story.

In July, we launched the latest addition to our Computer Clubhouse - a high tech audio and visual production studio! Our members are already busy recording music, making films and learning how to use their new software. Access to digital technologies and pathways into STEM education and careers was a big focus at World Council and I was delighted to share our learnings and the Computer Clubhouse journey to date with other member associations. The ability to leap frog into the digital world will be the major change driver for girls and young women - we need to recognise that digital disruption is here today and ensure we are a participant

and not a bystander.

We now turn our attention to planning for the upcoming 16 Days of Action to End Violence Against Women - a global campaign that takes place from 25 November to 10 December each year. We'll be hosting a range of events and advocacy activities throughout the 16 Days - keep an eye on our website and e-newsletter for more information.

On a governance level, we're excited to welcome our new Board Directors. As I write, we are preparing for our Annual General Meeting, and I look forward to introducing our new Directors and Office Bearers shortly.

Finally, I want to take a moment to commend our staff team at YWCA Canberra for tackling one of our biggest challenges this year - a move to a brand new office, and the roll-out of a new ICT framework for the organisation. Our new office at 71 Northbourne Avenue brings together three work sites to one location. It includes a state-of-art Education and Learning Centre to accommodate our numerous training and education courses, and a lounge for our members to use for gatherings, and to access our library of feminist books.

This significant investment in our operational capacity will ensure the sustainability of the organisation, and allow us to grow into the future. I am proud of our achievements over the past several months, and look forward to sharing them in more detail with you in these pages.

Kind regards,
Frances Crimmins

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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I was honoured to lead a delegation of members to World YWCA Council in October, and to have the opportunity to engage with our international movement through knowledge sharing and advocacy.

World Council created an incredible opportunity to take stock of the 'why' in our work as YWCAs. Young women have taken a stand and we are seeing a renewed focus on the development of young women to ensure the pipeline of future leaders. It was an incredible experience to engage at an international level and connect the work we do locally. I am so excited by the opportunities going forward and how together we can continue to grow and support the movement both at home and across borders.

World Council came at a particularly relevant time, as we embark on the YWCA Australia Sustainability Project here at home. This project will assess the purpose and role of the YWCA, and the future direction of our national movement going forward. It was wonderful to include feedback from our members in this process gained through the Sustainability Project Roadshow event in September, and we look forward to continuing to engage with you going forward.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say what an amazing year it has been for me as President of YWCA Canberra. This role has been exciting, challenging, and definitely a learning opportunity, and I am grateful to our members for giving me the chance to lead this dynamic organisation at the governance level.

I will be re-standing for the Board and for the role of President at this year's Annual General Meeting, and I hope to be able to continue contributing to YWCA Canberra through this position. I also look forward to welcoming our new Board Directors and our Board Trainees at the AGM.

Kind regards,
Kate Chipperfield

WORLD YWCA COUNCIL



WORLD YWCA COUNCIL – BRINGING THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT TOGETHER

From October 11 to 16, nine representatives from YWCA Canberra attended the 28th World YWCA Council in Bangkok, Thailand.

Held every four years in a different international location, World Council brings the global YWCA movement together to elect the new World YWCA Board, set the strategic directions for the movement for the next four years, and to share knowledge and skills across member associations.

This year, there were 73 countries represented, and the key issue on the table was the proposed Envisioning 2035 proposal, which was originally launched at the last World Council, and has been developed in the four years since. Envisioning 2035 sets the global YWCA movement with a series of strategic priorities, captured under one big goal:

'By 2035, 100 million young women and girls transform power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women.'

100 million women - that's almost four times our current reach and impact!

There's a reason why YWCA women have been called the 'dauntless bunch', however, as the movement voted to adopt the Envisioning 2035 proposal, and will be working towards implementing the priorities in the coming years.

On the first day of World Council, 500 voting delegates and observers gave a standing ovation to the representatives from YWCA Armenia and YWCA Burkina Faso, the newest associations to officially join the movement. There were tears, whooping and cheering as we welcomed the two countries to this amazing global movement that has been changing lives and shaping communities since 1855.

Shortly after this, our Canberra delegation made the pleasing discovery that there is an official YWCA song - it was played in all its 80's glory, and members of YWCAs who have been to

numerous World Councils rushed to the front of the room to dance with each other, an impromptu conga line forming.

These moments of joy and solidarity were amplified when we discussed big picture strategies and goals, and shared knowledge through the member-led workshops. These workshops covered topics all the way from ending child marriage through to building meaningful partnerships, and were an amazing opportunity to find out about the diversity of our movement, and note down ideas to bring back to Canberra with us.

However, World Council also included moments of solemnity - hearing from women from across the world about the incredible challenges they face in trying to achieve gender equality, not to mention the personal trauma many of them have experienced was particularly confronting at times, and a good reminder to us that we have some amazing privileges and rights in Australia that we occasionally take for granted.

Our YWCA Canberra delegation have returned to Canberra full of ideas, plans and renewed energy to keep building YWCA Canberra into a leading association in our international movement.

To read more insights from our delegates, visit our blog at www.ywca-canberra.org.au/blog.

Delegates:

- Frances Crimmins, Executive Director
- Kate Chipperfield, President
- Caitlin Sandercock, Vice-President
- Heidi Zajac, Board Director
- Zoya Patel, Corporate Relations and Advocacy Manager
- Louise Billman, Early Childhood Services Manager
- Samantha Betts, YWCA Canberra Member
- Abby Thevarajah, YWCA Canberra Member
- Gordana Morphet, YWCA Canberra Member

TIMORESE WOMEN TACKLING EMPOWERMENT IN THAILAND

By Heidi Zajac, YWCA Canberra Board Director and delegate

It is Day 2 of the 28th World Council 2015, and we are two YWCA Canberra women meeting two YWCA Timor-Leste women. We all know one another already from Australian visits to Timor. This time our meeting is in Thailand as we come to meet with women from almost every corner of the globe in the spirit of "bold and transformative leadership".

Mira Zulmira, 37 years, and Prudencia, 26 years, are two Timorese young women on a mission. They both live, work and care for family in the capital of Dili. They are also women who hold an unshakable commitment to women's rights and gender equity. In 2011, the YWCA Timor-Leste was established. Today, Mira is the



newly elected President of the organisation, and Prudencia the single staff member, paid part-time, but active full-time.

Mira is dynamic. We are speaking to her after the lunch crowd has emptied from the hotel restaurant. Mira speaks carefully but at length to answer our questions in detail about the strengths and challenges for the women of Timor-Leste. The four of us pour over the conversation, and before we know it, women are lining up in the restaurant once again, for afternoon tea!

Prudencia speaks quickly in Tetun - the lingua franca of Timor Leste. She has been in her role now for a few years now. Mira states that an increase in funding to YWCA Timor-Leste is essential if Prudencia is to be paid for her full-time commitment to the activities and programs, networks and young women she coordinates and nurtures.

Curiosity got the better of Prudencia, and she joined the YWCA. She explains "I didn't know what the YWCA was about, but I grew interested because I was always hearing about meetings this organisation was having... when I discovered they didn't even have an office, I became really curious!" As a leader now to other women, although reluctant with the term, Prudencia accepts that she holds a great responsibility to encourage young women, and support them, to create positive futures for all women in Timor Leste.

After some discussion of leadership, governance, and Mira's studies in Melbourne, Prudencia and Mira explain the challenges that young Timorese women confront. Gender perceptions appear to be the root of so many specific issues experienced by women, especially domestic violence and economic opportunities outside the home.

Disappointment flashes across Mira's face as she speaks about ongoing problems for women - she had expected to see better circumstances for the next generation of women, but it isn't so. Instead, young women continue to lack confidence in their skills and abilities and feel uncertain about their futures.

There is still work to happen before YWCA Timor-Leste is affiliated with World YWCA. And when it is, YWCA-TL will be one of the newest organisations in the YWCA movement, and one of the newest local organisations in the small nation of Timor-Leste. But none of this, nor the vast challenges that Timorese women live with, deters Mira or Prudencia. They know strength lies in numbers, in networks of women, of relationships, and as Prudencia puts beautifully; "empowerment comes from supporting, and being supported by, other women".



The strengths of Timorese young women are a match for any challenges that will come their way. Highly motivated and dedicated women and the spirit of volunteerism are fuelling the YWCA Timor-Leste. Mira tells us that the role of YWCA is to enable women to identify their skills and abilities. Doing this, she says, will enable women to build confidence and also support other women.

Mira moves easily between speaking about her vision for Timor-Leste to listing the practical steps that must be taken in order to make progress. Professional development to support women identifying their skills is a priority and attracting specific skills sets to the Board another.

Perhaps Mira appreciates the spirit of volunteerism she sees in other women because she is also a passionate volunteer in her role as President of YWCA Timor-Leste.

To find out more about the YWCA Timor-Leste, email Mira at zulmirafonseca1@gmail.com. You can follow the journey on the YWCA Timor-Leste Facebook page.

HELP US SHAPE THE 2016 SHE LEADS WORKSHOPS



HELP US SHAPE THE 2016 SHE LEADS WORKSHOP PROGRAM

The *She Leads* Workshops are a regular program of affordable, quality professional development workshops facilitated by YWCA Canberra members.

Workshop topics include our very popular Board Governance and Finance sessions, which are currently facilitated by our expert YWCA Canberra Board Directors, as well as our recent workshop on mindful leadership.

In 2016, we'll be expanding and developing the program to feature monthly 2-3hr workshops on a range of different topics, such as developing your online profile, organising events and conferences, and personal finance.

If you have suggestions for workshop topics or you are a member with a particular professional interest/skill that you would like to share with other members, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact the YWCA Canberra Leadership Programs Manager, Clare Conroy, at clare.conroy@ywca-canberra.org.au.



COMPUTER CLUBHOUSE AV STUDIO LAUNCH



SECTORS WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE FANTASTIC OUTCOMES FOR OUR CLUBHOUSE MEMBERS.

Arriving for the launch of our audio-visual production studio on Thursday 30 July, there were so many members in the space, busy working on their projects. The room was crowded and full of energy!

The YWCA Computer Clubhouse is an out-of-school learning space for young people from the Tuggeranong region, providing access to the latest in software and technology, and helping build pathways in future careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The audio-visual production studio (AV studio) is the latest addition to our Clubhouse. It's a dedicated space with the latest in video and sound recording equipment, including a green screen, professional lighting, brand new cameras, Mac computers loaded up with all the editing software needed, and more. The studio has been made possible through the generous support of our partner, Lockheed Martin Australia.

Our members are already busy using the space to create short films, edit their work, and dive into music production.

We celebrated the launch of the AV studio with a special event at the Clubhouse, bringing together our corporate and philanthropic partners, the Steering Committee, and members. Clubhouse member Ella opened the event with an acknowledgment of country, and we heard from Frances Crimmins, Executive Director of YWCA Canberra, and Julie Dunlap, Lockheed Martin Information Systems & Global Solutions, Vice President, Australian Programs.

Both Frances and Julie touched on the importance of the Clubhouse in providing avenues into careers in STEM for young people, especially as STEM continues to account for the vast majority of career opportunities, and will continue to grow in the future.



Julie also shared her personal journey to leadership as a woman in STEM, and highlighted the importance of people from diverse backgrounds and with unique experiences entering the industry.

Our members demonstrated some of the awesome projects they've been working on, including coding and web development, photography, fashion design and robotics. Cameron and Angus, who are keen users of the AV studio, interviewed some of our partners and Steering Committee members in front of the green screen, for a special video they'll be producing.

It was exciting to be able to demonstrate the growth of the Computer Clubhouse over the past nine months to our partners, and to give members the chance to share their projects with attendees.

The Computer Clubhouse is testament to what can be achieved when the community, government, philanthropic and corporate sectors work together with a shared vision and common goal.

Stay in touch by following the YWCA Computer Clubhouse on Twitter, and liking us on Facebook.

NEW GREAT YDEAS TAKING OFF

YWCA CANBERRA IS PROUD OF OUR GREAT YDEAS SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM, WHICH ENABLES CANBERRA WOMEN TO PURSUE INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE PROJECTS.

Two of our latest recipients, Chiara Grassia and Rosanna Stevens, discuss how the Great Ydea grants have helped them to realise their passion, and what lies ahead for their respective projects.

FROM CALIFORNIA TO CANBERRA: EMPOWERING GIRLS THROUGH MUSIC

Chiara Grassia is the founder of Girls Rock! Canberra (GR!C) a school holiday program which will kick off in January 2016. Girls Rock! Canberra will empower girls through music, encouraging creativity and fostering teamwork and leadership skills.

With her Great Ydeas grant, Chiara travelled to the USA to volunteer at Girls Rock! camps in three different cities (Oakland, California, Austin, Texas, and Portland, Oregon). As a volunteer band manager, she helped three groups of young girls, who had never met each other before, to form a band, write an original song and then perform it live at a public showcase.

"This experience was an invaluable opportunity to learn how these programs are structured and run, and meet camp organisers who were generous with their time and answered all my questions," said Chiara.

"It is inspiring to know that there are spaces where passionate individuals are striving to improve the lives of young girls and women by fostering a more supportive, inclusive community environment through music, and I'm so excited for Canberra to be a part of it," she said.

The inaugural session of Girls Rock! Canberra will be held from January 11-16, 2016, at Ainslie Arts Centre. Applications will open soon - keep an eye on GR!C's website, girlsrockaustralia.com for more information.



Girls Rock Camp participants from Oakland

WOMEN'S TRADITIONS, KNOWLEDGE & RITES OF PASSAGE

Rosanna Stevens is currently completing a non-fiction book on the cultural perceptions and histories of menstruation. She used her Great Ydeas grant to travel to The Sacred Valley in Peru to attend a course titled Wilka Warmi (Sacred Women in Quechua), which explored Shamanic and Andean women's knowledge.

Rosanna learned about Shamanic and First Nations Andean traditional knowledge in relation to women, menstruation, and rites of passage. The course allowed Rosanna to meet and share information with others working in various fields of women's knowledge, listen to the experiences of others from a range of social and cultural backgrounds, and reflect on the significant differences between colonised and traditional knowledge concerning menstruation.

Rosanna returned from her trip with a wealth of inspiration for her book.

"Most importantly, this funding and the subsequent course I was able to attend has given me fantastic material for the menstrual book: from adventures on mountainsides to learn about womb medicine, to visiting cosmic womb portals, to learning about how the seasons and physiological female rites are closely tied to the menstrual cycle.

"From this point on, I write! My goal is to have a draft of the period book complete by the end of 2016, and to have secured one of the publishers currently interested in the book. I am so deeply grateful to YWCA Canberra for helping to facilitate this," Rosanna said.



Rosanna visiting an Andean Womb Portal

ANTI-POVERTY WEEK ACT 2015

YWCA CANBERRA WAS ONCE AGAIN PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR ANTI-POVERTY WEEK IN THE ACT, HELD FROM 11-17 OCTOBER.

This year, the organising committee set its sights on creating a green paper on housing affordability, involving private and community sector organisations. The finished result, *Safe + Well: Redefining the housing affordability crisis* brought together papers from the Master Builders Association, AMC Architects, ACTCOSS and other community service organisations. YWCA Canberra's contribution was a chapter on housing vulnerability for women in the ACT.

The launch of the green paper was the headline event for the week, and received excellent media coverage - a feature story on ABC 7pm News and a page three story in The Canberra Times. The launch included a panel discussion moderated by ABC journalist Adrienne Francis, and featured Michael Hopkins, Master Builders Association, Craig Wallace, People with a Disability Australia, Susan Helyar, ACTCOSS, and Penny Leemhuis, an advocate for older women at risk of homelessness.

ACT Housing Minister Yvette Berry and Shadow Housing Minister Nicole Lawder each received a copy of the green paper, and also spoke at the launch. About 90 members of the public attended.

It proved an excellent way to highlight the issue of housing as one of the key determinants of poverty and hardship in the ACT.

In addition, approximately 25 separate Anti-Poverty Week events were held around Canberra during the week, including the very well-received Pens Against Poverty writing competition for primary and secondary school students.



PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



YWCA CANBERRA IS THE LOCAL FOCUS CHARITY FOR EY CANBERRA, WHICH HAS SUPPORTED OUR PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES THROUGH THE EY FOUNDATION, SKILLED VOLUNTEERING AND MORE.

EY staff are regular donors through a Workplace Giving program, with all funds raised through their donations going directly to our Computer Clubhouse program.

Recently, the EY Foundation organised a fundraising trivia night for their staff, to raise funds for the Clubhouse. They raised a massive \$2034, and had a great time doing it!

YWCA Canberra interviewed Masumi Yamamoto and Will Tse from EY Canberra, who organised the event, to share with us why they are dedicated to supporting YWCA Canberra.

Why does EY support YWCA Canberra?

YWCA Canberra is EY's local focus charity; the relationship forms part of our national EY Foundation's commitment to supporting and working with various charities across Australia. Our firm's vision is to build a better working world, and we believe this aligns with the excellent work of the YWCA, in particular your focus on youth and children's support services and building their capacity to learn and grow. Supporting YWCA Canberra is one of the great ways in which EY can contribute to our local community.

Do you regularly host the trivia night event? Why do you think social events are a good way to engage staff in fundraising?

Our trivia night is an annual event and this year we thought it would be an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of and fundraise for YWCA Canberra, and to have fun while we do it. We were also privileged to have Frances, Kate and a table of their staff and members join us on the night, which was really fantastic.

Social events like these are a great opportunity to bring people together, and are better still when we have a goal to achieve. So it's a really good way for us all to connect, to have fun and donate to a worthy cause.

What do you hope to see as the impact of your fundraising for the Computer Clubhouse?

We think the Computer Clubhouse is a fantastic initiative and we've been lucky to have visited and also had a number of great presentations from YWCA Canberra about the Clubhouse. These have been informative and inspiring. We hope that the funds raised from the trivia night will continue to support the Clubhouse and contribute to the engagement and development of the young people who use it.

What draws you personally to contributing to the EY Foundation?

The EY Foundation in Canberra is a great group of people who are passionate about supporting our local community, and being involved in various initiatives with our team is a lot of fun. The EY Foundation provides lots of opportunities for staff to donate both time and money to various charities and organisations in their local communities, and encourages staff to get involved in contributing to both our local community and pursuits they are personally passionate about.

EY is also committed to the fundraising and activity based support activities of the Foundation, so it's great to see such involvement from our leadership team. Overall, contributing to the EY Foundation is a rewarding experience, and gives us the opportunity to make a difference in our local community.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH: ROSIE HUNT-WALSHE

OUR MEMBERS TELL US THAT ONE OF THE THINGS THEY REALLY LOVE ABOUT BEING PART OF OUR COMMUNITY IS GETTING TO KNOW LIKEMINDED WOMEN.

Meet Rosie Hunt-Walsh, a recent YWCA Canberra member.

You in a nutshell:

I love my family, my sewing machine, feminism, netball and books.

What was your highlight of the past year?

During a recent holiday in Hawaii, I spent a day on a boat off the coast of Maui watching humpback whales (including a newborn calf). Being so close to these amazing creatures completely took my breath away! It was absolutely my highlight of the past year. A close second would be that my husband and I bought our first house this year, right here in Canberra. I love this city!

What's an achievement you're proud of?

I'm proud of the career I have built up in social policy, having spent a number of years in the Australian Government developing and implementing its policy responses on Indigenous affairs, gender equality and mental health. It is a real privilege to work on challenging and important issues that I am deeply passionate about.

What's on your playlist?

Currently, it's Ryan Adams' album covering Taylor Swift's album 1989 - two of my favourite artists perfectly combined. I'm also really enjoying Leigh Sales' and Annabel Crabb's podcast *Chat 10 Looks 3*. They are so smart, so dorky and so funny.

Why did you join the Y?

I am continually amazed (but not at all surprised!) at the bright, passionate and articulate women in my generation who are working so hard to achieve gender equality, both locally and globally. I wanted to be part of an organisation that seeks to harness the collective talents of young women to drive change.

Who inspires you?

What a hard question to answer! I am inspired by so many women from history, women I read about in the news, fictional characters, the women among my friends and family... but if I had to name one it would be my Grandma Jeanne. She was kind and quiet, but incredibly tough.

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

We have so far to go to eliminate violence against women, close the pay gap, boost the number of women in leadership positions and ensure all women can access the gains of feminism. My heart sinks every time I am told these issues are over-exaggerated, women are blamed for these issues, or these issues are discussed in a way that ignores the diversity of women in our community. I want governments, communities and individuals everywhere to fully acknowledge the struggle is real, devote necessary resources and create an expectation that everyone has a role in creating change. A global feminist awakening, maybe!



YWCA Canberra member - Rosie Hunt-Walsh

“I want governments, communities and individuals everywhere to fully acknowledge the struggle is real, devote necessary resources, and create an expectation that everyone has a role in creating change.”

WORLD YWCA COUNCIL

SOME GREAT PHOTOS FROM WORLD YWCA COUNCIL IN BANGKOK, THAILAND.



*Photography - YWCA Australia and YWCA Canberra