



# COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT 2018-19

YMCA OF BRISBANE  
Y-CARE (SOUTH EAST QLD) INC.

# YMCA BRISBANE GROUP

## YMCA OF BRISBANE Y-CARE (SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND) INC.

### CAMPING

Camp Leslie Dam, Warwick  
Camp North Pine, Whiteside  
Camp Warrawee, Joyner

### CHILD CARE

Early Education Centre  
- Acacia Ridge, Birtinya, Strathpine  
Family Day Care  
- Brisbane, Gold Coast  
In Home Care  
- Brisbane, Gold Coast (closed October)

### COMMUNITY AND YOUTH CENTRES

Community Centre  
- Springfield Lakes  
Youth Spaces  
- Acacia Ridge, North Lakes

### EDUCATION

Accredited Education and Training  
- Bowen Hills, Kingston  
Vocational Schools  
- Acacia Ridge, Ipswich, Kingston Junior, Kingston Senior and North Lakes

### FITNESS AND RECREATION

Aquatic Centre  
- Acacia Ridge  
Fitness, Recreation and Aquatics Centres  
- QUT: Gardens Point and Kelvin Grove, Victoria Point, Warwick  
Fitness and Recreation Centres  
- Bowen Hills, Jamboree Heights  
Gymnastics Centres  
- Acacia Ridge, Bowen Hills, Caloundra, Jamboree Heights, Stafford and Victoria Point.

### HOSPITALITY

George Williams Hotel, Brisbane  
Heritage Hotel, Whiteside  
North Pine Country Park, Whiteside

### HOUSING

Melville Place, Nerang  
Nowell B. Taylor House, Nerang  
Residential Units, Southport

### OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC)

Albany Creek, Ashgrove, Bald Hills, Berrinba East, Boondall, Bray Park, Brighton, Camira, Currimundi, Dakabin, Darling Heights, Edens Landing, Enoggera, Flagstone, Grovely, Gumdale, Helensvale, Kedron, Marsden, Mitchelton, Mt Gravatt, Musgrave Hill, Norris Road, Rainworth, Rochedale South, Sandgate, Seven Hills, Springfield Lakes, St Paul's, Strathpine, The Gap, Upper Virginia, Warrigal Road, Westside, Varsity College

A further four stand-alone vacation care services offered programs at Bowen Hills, Jamboree Heights, Joyner and Victoria Point

### SOCIAL IMPACT

LEAP (Learn, Empower, Achieve, Participate)  
- Disability Services  
Meals for the Homeless  
Op Shop  
- Upper Mt. Gravatt  
School-based Mentoring  
- Acacia Ridge, Ipswich, Kingston Junior, Kingston Senior and North Lakes  
Schools Breakfast Program  
- 113 locations across South East Queensland  
Specialist Outside School Hours Care  
- Aspley and Mitchelton

### YOUTH PROGRAMS

Australian Skate Park League  
Big Night Out  
Inspired Leaders  
mYnd pump  
Queensland Youth Parliament  
UpFronts  
Young CEO for the Day





**THE YMCA WORKS, FROM A BASE OF CHRISTIAN VALUES, TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PEOPLE TO GROW IN BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT.**

# YMCA MISSION

## OUR HISTORY

**The YMCA has been working in local communities across Australia since 1851 providing children's services, recreation, camping, youth services and community initiatives, events, training and accommodation.**

However, the humble beginnings of the YMCA started a long way from home. The YMCA was founded in 1844 during the Industrial Revolution in England, a time of great despair and poverty. George Williams, a drapery merchant, decided that something had to be done. He gathered together a few friends to form a society that met regularly to support each other and gain renewed strength in body, mind and spirit. The group called itself the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). From its inception, through to the early 1900s, the focus was on the welfare of young men and related social concerns.

Together with the other founding members, George

Williams wasted no time in organising YMCA branches throughout England, Scotland and Ireland. Over the next ten years, YMCA Movements also began to develop across Western Europe, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and India.

From the mid 1930s to the early 1960s, the YMCA was forced by depression and world war to revert to the original foundations of social and community concern. The emphasis was on supporting the welfare of young men at war, youth clubs, physical development, leadership training and education. YMCA associations and branches can now be found all over the world.

The YMCA has come a long way since forming in 1844. To be part of the YMCA today you don't need to be young, male, or Christian! Today we are a **vibrant, active community organisation**, seeking to make a positive difference by providing each and every person with the opportunity to be **healthy, happy and connected**.

## VALUES

**HONESTY  
CARING  
RESPECT  
RESPONSIBILITY**

## BELIEF

**WE BELIEVE IN THE  
POWER OF INSPIRED  
YOUNG PEOPLE.**

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**As you will see in this community impact report our YMCA is a diverse organisation. This is a very deliberate strategy - one that enables our YMCA to overcome the challenges brought about by changing social, economic and policy climates.**

The diversity of our organisation has been very important in what has been a challenging twelve months. Despite a number of our business areas struggling to maintain previous performance levels, our YMCA has continued to grow through strong contributions from our Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), Vocational School and hotel operations.

Building on the outstanding success of our Vocational Schools model, in the 2018-19 financial year planning continued towards the establishment of new campuses in Mango Hill, Victoria Point and Ipswich. Each of these new campuses will be built on land owned by our YMCA in areas of current and future need. Our preference, wherever possible, is to purchase and operate our own facilities so that we can have generational influences in the communities we serve.

Our vocational schools model is not just sustainable - it is highly impactful. Our YMCA has developed a robust impact measurement framework that demonstrates the effectiveness of our schools and other programs. We know that to be impactful, we must be there for the long-term. Sustainability is therefore crucial if we are to have the positive impact that changes a young person's direction in life.

The diversity of programming also supports our achievement of mission, explicitly the provision of opportunities for all people to develop in body, mind and spirit. This year we established a disability support unit known as LEAP (Learn, Empower, Achieve and Participate). The unit has supported the growth of tailored learn to swim programs in our aquatic facilities and provided access to NDIS funding for young people in our Specialist OSHC programs. Through LEAP we seek to provide inclusive opportunities for all people to enjoy their chosen YMCA experience.

We could not do all of this on our own. We are very fortunate to be supported by a number of corporate partners and other not-for-profit organisations who share our values, and who together help our YMCA deliver long-term, sustainable outcomes in the communities we serve.

Thank you to my fellow board members for their commitment to strengthening our YMCA, to CEO Alan Bray and all of our staff and volunteers, whose passion to make a difference in their community is what drives our significant achievements.

**- Daniel Cheverton**  
PRESIDENT



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

**Sustainability, replicability and impact** are three words that have guided our YMCA over the last twelve months. Impact is achieved when we have proven results measured through a robust outcomes framework. Where we have a sustainable impact, we seek to replicate these programs across additional communities of identified need. Our impact across the 2018/19 financial year is demonstrated within the stories you will read throughout this community impact report.

This year, our YMCA was delighted to be announced as the successful partner to manage QUT's fitness and aquatic facilities at Kelvin Grove and Gardens Point. Extensive fit-outs and brand new equipment have helped ensure these facilities are state of the art and befitting QUT's vision. More importantly however, we have developed a culture of collaboration, working closely to support the evolving needs of QUT staff and students.

Our Jamboree Heights Fitness and Recreation centre underwent significant renovations totalling \$1M this year. The project included expanding our gymnastics floor area, creating a new group exercise room, redeveloping the reception area and constructing four new allied health suites. This project will help secure the future sustainability of this important community facility.

Funded by the Southern Downs Regional Council but managed by our YMCA, the pool plant for both the hydro and main pool at Warwick Indoor Recreation and Aquatic Centre (WIRAC) was replaced, providing not just cost savings, but significant environmental benefits through reduced heating and chemical usage.

The refurbishment of our new office space at 101 Brunswick Street allowed the relocation of three of our staff teams – workplace health and safety, marketing and youth development. Our youth team was quickly able to put this space to good use, hosting our inaugural Upfronts event, showcasing the skills and ideas of young

people from across our organisation.

In an effort to grow our fundraising presence we hosted two additional events, the third instalment of the Rat Race and the inaugural Cancer Survivor Ball. Whilst the events did not achieve the financial returns we hoped for, both were successful in generating significant awareness of our YMCA's programs and providing great enjoyment for those that attended.

On Sunday 11 November a moving ceremony was held at YMCA Bowen Hills to mark one hundred years since the end of World War One, and to recognise those that did not return. The ceremony was held amongst a spectacular arrangement of more than **120,000 poppies**, each hand made by YMCA staff and volunteers.

In February it was our great privilege to host the 2019 World Alliance of YMCAs National General Secretaries meeting. Our Y was selected as host in recognition for being innovative and for providing excellent programming that has been driven by community need. The General Secretaries from 45 countries were very complimentary of our YMCA and took home a number of ideas to implement in their own Associations.

The achievements of our YMCA are due to the collective efforts of a great number of people and supporters. We are also very fortunate and grateful to have the long-term support of a number of councils, businesses, government departments and other charities that all add great value to our YMCA through a myriad of collaborative partnerships.

Finally, my sincere thanks go to all staff and volunteers for their amazing support and dedication - each of whom, regardless of their position, play a vitally important role in our YMCA's positive impact on each and every community we serve.

– Alan Bray  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

# SNAPSHOT OF YOUR YMCA

IN OVER 180 LOCATIONS THE YMCA OFFERS A RANGE OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING



6 fitness clubs;  
**10,330** members;  
**576,232** visits

**93,143** adult and children learn to swim participations

**4,451** gymnasts; **188,812** class participations; **6** gymnastics clubs

**1,192** participants in the Rat Race



**698,110** free breakfast meals across **113** schools supporting **9,625** students



## CAMPING

**3** CAMP SITES HOSTING **10,416** CAMPERS

**48,416** CAMP MEALS & FACILITATING **49,379** ADVENTURE ACTIVITY PARTICIPATIONS



## SPRINGFIELD LAKES COMMUNITY CENTRE

**3,402** EVENTS ATTRACTING **OVER 25,000** VISITORS



Community Centre Christmas Appeal

## CHILD CARE SERVICES

**732** families attended  
665,453 hours of care in our home-based care programs



**33,800** sessions of care across 3 Child Care centres

More than **859,000** participations in Before School, After School and Vacation Care



**4,426** participations in Specialist OSHC



## HOSPITALITY

**26,946** GUESTS STAYED IN OUR HOTEL





## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**441** students enrolled across 5 campuses of the YMCA's Vocational School

YMCA delivered **9** different qualifications and **3** short courses to **1,162** students across Queensland



**72%** of Vocational School students graduated in 2018

**How all schools should be. No judgements, learning life skills with supportive teachers. I feel this school would benefit troubled students from Grade Nine. Keep up the great work! We would hate to think where we would be without this supportive environment.**

– Parent, YMCA Vocational School (Moreton Bay Campus)



**The YMCA has helped me grow both as a person and as a professional. The sense of community is so welcoming and encouraging, which helps you be the best mentor possible.**

– Volunteer Mentor



## YOUTH PROGRAMS

**105** Mentors provided **37,485** hours of mentoring totalling **13,566** participations

**52 FREE** places in mYnd Pump, a 12-week group fitness program aimed at improving both the mental and physical well-being of young people

**93** Youth Members debated **8** Youth Bills over 4 days in Queensland Parliament House, all supported by **18** young volunteers



Youth Members volunteered at over **100** community events

**3** skate competitions supporting **133** participants

**903,587** participants across all YMCA youth programs

Over **78,000** volunteer hours towards YMCA youth programs

## PEOPLE

**1,024** PASSIONATE AND DEDICATED STAFF MEMBERS



**160** GENEROUS VOLUNTEERS DONATING THEIR VALUABLE TIME AND TALENT

# OUR IMPACT



**MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE THROUGH  
PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE HAPPY,  
HEALTHY AND CONNECTED**



## **BIG NIGHT OUT**

**– JILL ROUSSEY**

YOUTH SPACE COORDINATOR, THE SPACE,  
NORTH LAKES

With the support of **43 young volunteers** and a range of community and local business partners, the Space hosted a festival to showcase the talents of young people. Attracting over **350 visitors**, the event delivered 3 on 3 and long-shot basketball competitions, aerosol art workshops, watercolour painting, henna and glitter pampering, singing, poetry, rapping and dance.

# PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, BY YOUNG PEOPLE

## SPLASH OF COLOUR FUN RUN

**15 young people** were supported by the youth team from Acacia Ridge to deliver a Fun Run as part of the Splash of Colour festival. Run entirely by young people, the festival connected the community and raised money for a local homelessness service.

– **CHRIS RICHARDS**

YOUTH SPACE COORDINATOR, THE RIDGE



## THE BUZZ

**The BUZZ** brought together the community from across Acacia Ridge and surrounding suburbs to celebrate the skills, diversity and passion of young people. The event delivered a range of performances, workshops and activities including inflatable games, dance competitions, art, DJs, podcasting and food stalls.

## YOUNG CEO

– **KELLY MOORE**

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECTS OFFICER,  
YMCA SOCIAL IMPACT

I kicked off with the Y in 2014 as the Receptionist for the Moreton Bay Vocational School and Youth Space. 4.5 years down the line in that role, I've done nothing but grow and develop as what some might consider an "Inspired Young Person". For the last year and a while, I've been in a new position of Senior Administrator and Projects Officer, which has been such an interesting and challenging step forward.

I was a little shocked when I was told I had been nominated and deemed the Young CEO of the year. When discussing how it typically works, I was pretty keen to sink my teeth into the format a different way. Being in this role I've wanted to better understand the systematic decision making and function of both YMCA Brisbane and Social Impact. So my approach was a string of interviews for all Group Management/Shared Services. The take away was great! I had some really genuine conversations with some excellent and passionate people, which I feel in my role I can help further strengthen relationships across the Y.

# AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF YOUNG QUEENSLANDERS



“ This program has come to change my opinions on various topics and peoples within the world, I feel as though I am a brand new person, completely reborn. This program has changed me in so many different ways that I can't even begin to understand.

– 2018 Youth Member ”

## – LACHLAN SANDS

COORDINATOR, QUEENSLAND YOUTH PARLIAMENT

YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament (QYP) is a unique opportunity for young people to create real change. Bringing together 93 young people, one from each electorate in the state, QYP amplifies the voice of young people on a stage where they have the access to influence Queensland's politicians and decision-makers.

Immersed in unique educational opportunities, QYP provides a transformative experience that empowers young people and ensures their voice is heard.

**QYP is run by young people, for young people.**

# UPFRONTS

In July 2018 our YMCA held its first YMCA Upfronts youth event. The event was also the first to be held at 101 Brunswick Street Fortitude Valley, previously a gallery with a focus on street art, which is the perfect venue for a youth event.

Upfronts was developed to increase youth cohesiveness and connectivity across the operations of our YMCA. The event also gave young people an opportunity to pitch ideas for potential projects, programs and initiatives that the YMCA could deliver. We had 115 (mainly) young people attend from social impact, childcare, fitness, camping, education, hospitality, youth and recreation, as well as a communications team from YMCAs across Australia.

Throughout the evening we had a number of speeches, pitches and musical performances, all from young people. The master of ceremonies was Jason Mash, OSHC. We heard speeches from Matt Swires, Social Impact and Jayden Parsons, Youth Development. We had two brilliant performances from Erin and Daykota, students from the YMCA's Vocational School, Moreton Bay Campus. They were supported by their 'roadie,' and youth worker Aaron Ainsworth.

We had five excellent pitches on the evening, with two winners chosen by our judging panel. Creative Living – from Hannah Nielsen and Phoebe Hall (a 14 year old student), who received the judges vote and Village Co – pitched by Anthony Parkinson, who received the popular vote. The Creative Living project is currently in operation at Kingston and is looking to expand its operations. It involves students creating furniture from recycled timber, and learning how to run the business side of promoting and selling the products. Village Co – is a project to help reduce Youth Unemployment.

– JAYDEN PARSONS  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR





# CLOSING THE GAP

**- CHANTAL WISE**

DIRECTOR, STRATHPINE CHILD CARE CENTRE

Children's Services has always embraced opportunities to work with local Indigenous Groups and Elders to support **inclusion, cultural celebration and education**. This year we have joined the YMCA Movement in formalising our commitment to closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families in relation to improved learning, health and wellbeing, and inclusion outcomes.

To guide and inform the work we are developing Reflective Reconciliation Action Plans. This work was initiated at our Strathpine Child Care Centre who established a working group, with the inclusion of one of our Indigenous parents who has children in our care. This work has led to some amazing connections including this parent's mother, a generous and proud Indigenous woman offering her time and expertise to our Children's Services and the broader organisation.

## “I DON’T THINK I’D BE WHERE I AM TODAY WITHOUT THE Y”

– IONA WYLLIE

COMMUNITY & COMPLIANCE MANAGER, YMCA HOUSING

Jade, a graduate of the Y’s Kingston Vocational School is a living, breathing example of how the Y’s everyday work is changing lives and inspiring young people around the country. Jade didn’t have an easy start in life. Failed by the foster care system, Jade began couch surfing at just 13. In spite of her unstable living situation, Jade’s commitment to her education was unwavering. “I had the drive to do something and become someone. To do that you need an education,” says Jade.

However, even with such strong conviction Jade quickly became disenchanted with the traditional education system. Constantly worried about where her next meal would come from and without access to the facilities needed to wash her school uniform, Jade could hardly focus on her studies. Completely out of options and almost ready to give up, Jade applied for financial support through Centrelink, where she was pointed in the direction of the Y’s Vocational School in Kingston.

For Jade, the school provided exactly what she needed, not just an education, but a real support network. **“They genuinely care about their students, it’s not just a school, it’s a family,”** says Jade.

Jade’s education began to improve, but her living conditions still proved detrimental to both her wellbeing and academic performance. When the school’s social worker Iona discovered exactly how rough Jade had been living, she knew something had to be done.

“When I first sat down with Jade, she was coming out of class and was very upset. In class they were talking about what foods they liked and Jade hadn’t eaten for a couple of days,” Iona recalls, “At that time, she was living in a windowless caravan. It had been raining for two weeks, everything was soaked and there were cockroaches everywhere. She showed me bite marks on her legs.”

Iona took action immediately, using her experience with the department of housing to secure housing and support for Jade. With Iona by her side every step of the way, and the full support of the Y behind her, Jade was provided with one of the Y’s Affordable Housing units.

With a safe and stable home, Jade was finally able to focus on her studies, graduating year 12 as Student of the Year among other accolades. Jade now works as an apprentice with the Logan City Council and remains a strong advocate for the pursuit of education through any obstacle.

“This is a wonderful Op Shop, with lovely staff. It was a pleasure to look around as it is easy to find anything specific you may be searching for... I fully recommend a visit to this gem of a place.”

– LEEANNE, YMCA OP SHOP CUSTOMER

## OP SHOP

– KYLA RUMEL

MANAGER, OP SHOP (MT GRAVATT)

Our Op Shop is committed to making a difference in the community. As a social enterprise, the Op Shop **raises money for the Schools’ Breakfast program**, provides retail training opportunities to school students, gives skills and positive socialisation for volunteers and makes a positive environmental impact by recycling quality goods destined for landfill. However, the generosity of the community allows us to do more. In partnership with the Mount Gravatt Community Centre, our YMCA is able to provide a more holistic service to our most vulnerable clients in need of clothing and other items. The Op Shop provides clothing and other essential items at no cost to community members facing severe financial hardship. In partnership with the Mount Gravatt Community Centre, we make a real difference to the lives of those who need it most.

“I CAN FOCUS ON ME NOW, AND NOT JUST EVERYTHING ELSE THAT WAS GOING ON IN MY LIFE, I DON’T THINK I’D BE WHERE I AM TODAY WITHOUT THE Y.”

– JADE



# LIVING WELL THROUGH CANCER



Bev and David credit the support of the program for helping them live well through and after cancer.

**In a complete reversal of earlier advice to rest and recuperate, a growing body of international evidence shows regular exercise not only helps prevent cancer but significantly helps patients cope better with treatment, reduces side-effects, slows disease progression, reduces the risk of re-occurrence, and improves the chance of long-term survival as well as individual's overall quality of life. So much so, peak body Clinical Oncology Society of Australia last year released a position statement calling for exercise to be an integral part of all cancer patients' treatment, a position backed by the Cancer Council of Australia and the Medical Oncology Group of Australia.**

## – ADRIEN FITZPATRICK

MANAGER, YMCA VICTORIA POINT FITNESS AND AQUATICS

In 2016, David was diagnosed with two separate and aggressive forms of cancer – prostate and bowel. Following extensive surgery then chemotherapy and radiation, David's health was very fragile. Requiring support to improve his physical well-being, David attended the YMCA's free Cancer Survivor program.

It was whilst attending the program that Bev, David's wife, was diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Knowing what was ahead, Bev also joined the program determined to improve her health and prepare for the upcoming treatments. Bev credits the program with her ability to recover quickly from her surgeries.

Both Bev and David led active lives prior to their diagnoses, however they never felt the need to join a gym. Following completion of stage 1 of the Cancer Survivor's program, they are both now members of the YMCA and continue to work out regularly, in fact they pass a gym at the end of their street on the way to the Y!

# 270

**CANCER SURVIVORS** WERE SUPPORTED  
IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST CANCER  
THROUGH OUR FREE 12 WEEK GROUP  
PERSONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS



## A LEAP TO INCLUSION

– JENNIFER HOUSTON

MANAGER – LEAP DISABILITY SERVICES

During the lead up to vacation care an enrolment was received for a young boy who presents with challenging behaviours. Oliver\* attends a local Special School and can display behaviours which pose a risk to both himself and others around him. In order to understand his behaviours and triggers, our staff spent time with teachers and the student in his usual classroom setting. Oliver has severe Autism, is non-verbal and has high anxiety levels. Further, his actions and behaviours mean that he needs to be confined to a secure area at all times.

With a number of boundaries developed, Oliver attended Vacation Care providing much needed respite for his parents who, as a result of their son's behaviours, have been placed under a great deal of pressure.

Oliver attended the first day and while his anxiety levels were high, his behaviours were not as severe as had been anticipated. Over the Vacation Care period Oliver's confidence in our staff grew and our ability to identify his triggers and redirect him improved. By the end of the vacation care period Oliver had spent every day with us and was spending full days in our care. It was amazing to watch his confidence grow. Oliver's family were extremely appreciative of the measures we put in place, and his Mum cried on the last day as she was amazed how far he had grown - from being a little boy in a secure environment to a more confident young man who loved playing outside, cooking and washing dishes. We are now in discussion with his Psychologist around him attending After School Care, in order to nurture Oliver's friendships and peer relationships.

\*Name changed for privacy purposes



61,530 Australians and  
16,697 New Zealanders  
lost their lives  
in the First World War



# THE YMCA RED POPPY PROJECT: COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WWI



## – MEG WOOLF

GROUP MANAGER, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The First World War, which raged for five long years from 1914-1918, resulted in the deaths 30 Million people many of whom were civilians. It left unimaginable grief and devastation. It would go on to be called the “war to end all wars” but, as history demonstrates, that title proved to be tragically optimistic.

World War One remains Australia’s most costly conflict in terms of human life – almost 62,000 Australians and 17,000 New Zealanders died. From an Australian population of fewer than 5 million people in 1914, a total of 416,808 men enlisted, representing 37% of that entire age-cohort of men in the nation.

For the families of those who died in the valleys and ridges of Gallipoli, on the rocky hills of Palestine and in the mud on the Western Front – there is no grave to visit, no headstone to touch and no place to lay flowers.

**To mark the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI and the signing of the Armistice, the YMCA of Brisbane commenced a project to hand-make red poppies to honour the ANZACS who died.** Although the initial target was to make 6,000 poppies, the positive reaction of staff, children, members, families and the community was overwhelming and resulted in the making of **120,000 poppies**. The red poppies, which were exhibited in local YMCAs for months leading up to Remembrance Day 2018, were eventually displayed inside and outside of the YMCA facility at Bowen Hills on 11 November 2018 to coincide with a service and wreath laying ceremony.

Of special significance at the ceremony was a lone Piper who played to the laying of wreaths lead by the Honourable Grace Grace, the reading of A Soldier’s Prayer by Corporal Reilly from the Royal Australian Army Medical Corp, The Ode by Director Richard Edwards and poem We Shall Keep the Faith by Director Toolah Olsen.

During the ceremony, Chief Executive Officer, Alan Bray, spoke on the YMCA’s involvement in WWI whereby volunteers from the YMCA travelled to war torn countries, without pay, without title, without recognition as a military force and without weapons. With few resources and little idea of what lay ahead of them, 394 YMCA men set off with great resolve to become Australian YMCA representatives providing non-military support to soldiers on the ground. They experienced the same appalling conditions as the soldiers they were there to support - blistering heat, freezing cold, hunger, fear, illness, injury, relentless rain, mud and home-sickness. A special grouping of 394 red, white and black poppies were displayed on Remembrance Day in their honour.

The poem “In Flanders’ Fields” was written in 1915 by Canadian Dr John McCrae after witnessing the horrific loss of life on the Western Front. Influenced by red poppies that grew wild among the stones marking the graves of those killed fighting for their country, his poem has become one of the most significant war poems written. Fellow Canadian, Prof. James Allan, recited this beautiful poem during the ceremony at Bowen Hills.

Alan Bray also reminded us that YMCA Volunteer, Moina Michael, was so moved by McCrae’s poem that she responded with her own poem “We Shall Keep the Faith” and provided red silk poppies for YMCA delegates to wear thereby starting the world-wide tradition of wearing a red poppy as a symbol of remembrance to the fallen. Another significant first for the YMCA.



“

**This Brisbane YMCA project, that began so modest, became huge and was a respectful way to honour those lives sacrificed for our peace.**

**The project reinforced that we will remember them.**

”



## SUPPORTING REFUGEES INTO EMPLOYMENT

– EMILY HUNT (Senior Youth Worker)

Our first Skilling Queenslanders for Work Certificate II in Salon Assistant course started in November 2018 and one of the first participants was a lady named Lina. Lina and her husband arrived in Australia around 3 years ago as refugees from war-torn Syria. In Syria, Rima had worked as a Sales Rep for high end beauty brands, whilst her husband had been an Accountant. Since being in Australia both had struggled to gain employment, as they went through the process of learning English and adjusting to Australian society after the experience of fleeing a war zone.

When Lina first commenced the course, her confidence was low, and her self-image was undermined by her experience, including her recent years of unemployment. She was a keen student with very high attendance and she quickly developed the required skills. Lina enthusiastically took on a work experience placement and her knowledge and skills continued to grow.

One of her challenges in class was learning new industry terms in English. The other students assisted by creating a 'word wall' that displayed words and meanings of anything new that she and the other non-English speaking background participants encountered.

## UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION

### – SHIGGY SHINOMIYA

CENTRE DIRECTOR, QUT GARDENS POINT FITNESS AND AQUATIC

Seeking a more collaborative approach, QUT selected the YMCA as their preferred partner to manage their fitness and aquatic facilities at the Kelvin Grove and Gardens Point campuses. Following an extensive refurbishment and fit out with state of the art equipment, the fitness and aquatic facilities now provide an enhanced experience for all people involved in the QUT community.

In keeping with this collaborative approach our YMCA supported two events on QUT's annual calendar – Dragon Boat Race and the QUT Classic Run. Tailored warm ups were delivered by YMCA staff to the event participants and memberships and visit passes donated as prizes. We look forward to supporting these and other QUT events in future, as we partner with QUT in the development of a healthy, happy and engaged campus community.



At her second work experience placement, Lina was offered casual work, and this spurred her on to reach full employment. She started to have interviews in the hairdressing industry and didn't let early rejections slow her down. On her third interview, Lina secured a hairdressing apprenticeship at George Salon, which she has now enthusiastically commenced. Not only that, but she also got a call back from an earlier interview with David Jones, where she has been offered casual work in the beauty section. We are so proud of Lina for demonstrating such resilience and ultimately her success.

# JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT

– MENNY MONAHAN  
SENIOR WELLBEING COUNSELLOR,  
YMCA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

“Since leaving the school, he has completed a traineeship in Construction at TAFE and now he works doing high rise labouring. He obtained his manual driver’s license and purchased a car. He is now able to go to the shops and all other places by himself. Anyone that knows Steven would know that this is huge for him.”

– STEVEN’S MUM

**Meet Steven, he’s a ‘high-rise’ construction worker on the Gold Coast. After graduating from our YMCA school, he completed an apprenticeship in Construction at TAFE and his story is inspirational.**

When we first met Steven in 2016, he was so riddled with anxiety that we could not walk him through the school at his initial appointment. We had to walk around the outside of the building, while he reluctantly looked through the classroom windows. Steven had been diagnosed with a Speech and Language Impairment and Socio-Emotional Disorder. He was severely bullied at a previous school and had not attended school for months. His mother explains that “when he attended his previous school, he actually pretended to go to school and hid downstairs for 3 days. The only reason this was discovered was due to a repairman having to attend our home and Steven was in a room downstairs that we didn’t use.”

Our Head of Campus carefully allocated Steven a teacher who would be instrumental in changing this young man’s life. In line with his high needs due to severe Anxiety, our Head of Campus placed him with a calm, quiet and structured teacher.

The school counsellor ‘shadowed’ Steven for the first week, attended each class with him to help him to settle in and to reduce symptoms of anxiety. Steven attended counselling at the school on a weekly basis before attending ‘The A-Team’ (Anxiety Workshop). Within these workshops, many changes were noted, as the group supported him with care and honesty.

“Prior to starting at YMCA I thought Steven would never work due to his high anxiety but now thanks to the dedicated and compassionate staff at YMCA Vocational School I think his future is bright and he can achieve anything he sets his mind to. The school even continues helping when your child has left the school. It is not just a school you become part of a family, which you will not obtain anywhere else.”

Steven is a classic example of a young man who took every opportunity that was thrown at him. He rose above all expectations and we are immensely proud of him. He will always be an inspirational and valuable member of our school community.

# FOOD FOR ALL

– CATHERINE HANNELL

MANAGER - SCHOOLS' BREAKFAST PROGRAM

**The YMCA Schools' Breakfast Program currently supports over 110 schools within South East Queensland enabling them to provide healthy breakfasts to students in need which improves their capacity to learn and be successful in school.**



MEALS PROVIDED IN 2018-19

**698,110**

MEALS PROVIDED SINCE THE PROGRAM COMMENCED IN 2006

**4,340,058**



The breakfast program benefits our school community significantly. There is healthy food available in our school that may not be available at home. The teachers, students and staff all support each other having a healthy meal, sitting together, eating and tidying the kitchen. It develops school relationships, healthy eating practice and life skills. A very valuable part of our program.

We don't have a formal volunteer program, we have a small environment with a family style kitchen. Our students will encourage each other to eat a good morning meal. They will make meals for another person who may be doing it tough. It has built support and comradery for each other.

One young man was couch surfing or living on the streets. He would make the effort to come to school, have breakfast and stay the full day. He often commented that he hadn't eaten since the previous day's breakfast. He was offered sandwiches and fruit as a midday meal as well."

– **Business Manager / School Leader**

Participating School



## KEY BREAKFAST PROGRAM OUTCOMES



- COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS
- FOOD SECURITY
- BEHAVIOUR
- SOCIAL SKILLS
- FOOD AUTONOMY
- IMPROVED ATTENDANCE
- INCREASED PARTICIPATION AND FOCUS IN CLASS





“

As well as providing important nutrition for students who would not otherwise have access, Breakfast club also provides a safe, supportive and welcoming space for students who arrive at school upset, lonely and/or concerned.

They can share their concerns and/or good news stories with responsible adults and other students. Breakfast Club provides an important space for students to connect with each other and experience a positive start to their day.

– DEPUTY PRINCIPAL,  
PARTICIPATING SCHOOL

”



# YMCA RAT RACE 2018

## – JANE BARR-THOMSON

Marketing and Fundraising Manager

YMCA Rat Race 2018 took place on Sunday 28th October – on a beautiful hot sunny day. The event consisted of two obstacle courses; a 4km Event and an 8km Event. The 4km event incorporated 8 obstacles, and the main Team Event incorporated all 16 obstacles. Competitors took part in teams of 2 or more and were given a large inflatable cheese to protect and carry with them throughout the scenic river based course. The event concluded with a festival in Captain Burke Park where participants enjoyed food, drinks and live music all with a brilliant city view.



Once again, the event raised awareness for the YMCA's School's Breakfast Program as well as the organisation as a whole. From the post-event survey, 60% said that they were not aware of the YMCA School's Breakfast Program prior to participating in the event, with 70.43% of respondents claiming to now have a better understanding of how the YMCA gives back to our community. Overall, our efforts this year reached just **over 14 million touchpoints** across social media platforms, radio and television advertising, newspaper and printed publications, billboard and text message notifications as well as innovative physical activations that took place across Brisbane.

While our team has accomplished an extraordinary feat, 2018 was not without its challenges. Issues aside, the event could not have been the success it was without the assistance of a huge number of tireless volunteers, a fantastic group of suppliers and a highly dedicated events team.

The aim of YMCA Rat Race is to raise funds and awareness for the YMCA's School's Breakfast Program. In addition to this, the event raised significant awareness of the YMCA within the community as an organisation that supports healthy living, empowers Brisbane's youth and makes a large social impact. In 2018, our event had an **increase of over 60%** in number of competitors, with **1611 participants** showing up on the day.

# PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

– **CHRIS STOCKS**, Project Manager

## MANGO HILL

In May 2019 our YMCA signed a contract to construct a new multipurpose facility in Mango Hill. The development will include a community centre with embedded junior secondary school campus, a gymnastics facility, social enterprise space for an op shop and retail space to lease to tenants. It is expected that the new facility will be operational in April 2020.

## ALBANY CREEK OSHC BUILDING

Due to the limited space to cater for OSHC programs Albany Creek State School sought support from the YMCA to bring their own building to the school site. At a cost of \$800,000 the YMCA landed a permanent demountable on site, doubling the available OSHC space. This will enable us to help thousands of students at the school develop and grow in an **inclusive and supportive YMCA community**.

## YMCA JAMBOREE HEIGHTS FITNESS AND RECREATION CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

The YMCA has **invested \$1 million** in updating its Jamboree Heights Fitness and Recreation Centre, reflecting the important role the centre plays in the health and wellness of the local community.

The major changes throughout the Centre are the new and extended foyer and reception area, new group fitness, RPM, Pilates and Yoga studios, extension to our existing gymnastics hall, and addition of four new allied health professional offices. We also purchased brand new cardio equipment for the gym and a Ninja rig for gymnastics to extend our programming options.

The centre upgrade provided the YMCA the opportunity to recognise long term staff member Cheryle Beadman, through the honour of having the new group fitness studio named after her.

The YMCA acknowledges the generosity of the Queensland Government's Department of Sport and Recreation who supported the project through a **\$150,000 grant**.

## LIMESTONE STREET, IPSWICH

The 2018 purchase of the former aged care facility known as 'Villa Maria' in the Ipswich CBD will allow our YMCA to establish a youth/community centre with embedded junior secondary vocational school campus. A proven model, this combination of programming provides good facility occupation year round, and a safe supportive environment in which young people can thrive.

In staging the site's activation, mid-2019 will see the opening of our second Op Shop. Utilising Villa Maria's chapel, the Op Shop will provide us with a valuable presence in the community as the process of reinventing the site progresses.



**THE YMCA STRIVES FOR AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY WHERE EVERYONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REACH HIS OR HER POTENTIAL. WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF INSPIRED YOUNG PEOPLE, AND AS SUCH, WE WANT TO PROVIDE A TANGIBLE EXPRESSION OF THEIR RIGHTS AND THEIR VOICES. THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IS PARAMOUNT.**

At the YMCA we employ suitably qualified staff to supervise, care for and educate children and young people across all of our programs and services. We strive always to act in the best interests of children and young people who are entrusted to our care and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety. Above all, we are committed to providing an environment where everyone is protected from any form of abuse or mistreatment.

### **THE YMCA HAS A CULTURE OF AWARENESS AND VIGILANCE SUPPORTED BY:**

- **Staff and volunteer screening, training and code of conduct**
- **Clear documented policies and procedures**
- **Incident reporting, management and analysis**
- **A focus on staff and volunteers documenting any concerns they may have**
- **A culture of 'if you see something ... say something'**
- **A consideration of child safety into facility design**
- **A trusted environment for children to disclose or share their concerns**

The YMCA is very proud to have achieved accreditation and re-accreditation as a child safe organisation through the Australian Childhood Foundation, following independent and comprehensive reviews of our organisational policies, procedures and practices. The program is a unique voluntary accreditation scheme for organisations who have a duty of care to children and young people whilst delivering a service or activity to them and/or their families. The program systematically builds the capacity of organisations to keep children and young people safe from abuse.

Please join us in speaking out and taking action to ensure all children and young people are supported to grow up free from harm.



**SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**AMELIA SHAW**

The YMCA extends their appreciation to Invited Members to the Board, John Mitchell and Heather Allan, who volunteered their expertise to support the work of our Association.



**IAN SMYLLIE**

# THANK YOU

The YMCA wishes to acknowledge and thank all of our supporters and donors who have contributed to the community impact achieved by our YMCA over the last twelve months.

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Independent Schools Queensland  
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- Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women  
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Department of Housing and Public Works (Sport and Recreation)  
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund

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