

Returned Volunteers

Our returned volunteers embody the vision of YCA in their professional and personal spheres. YCA hopes that challengers use the experience as a beginning of a life-long commitment to community development. We hear stories every day about our challengers who are spread across the globe in development work, or who have found more personal ways to engage in community service. Medicin sans Frontiers, Youth off the Streets, the United Nations, indigenous agencies and AusAID are only some of the organisations that have benefited from returned volunteers' commitment. They continue to help YCA with Selection Days and Workshop Weekends and by promoting YCA at various events. Their outstanding enthusiasm for our programs helps to keep the mission and vision of YCA alive.



Organisation

Staff

Indu Balachandran - Executive Director
Mandy Kearsley - Youth Program Manager
Emma Rochford - Youth Program Coordinator
Ben Howell - Medical Coordinator

Program Support Volunteer Coordinators

New South Wales - Peter Tattersall
Western Australia - Claire Pope
Victoria - Tristan Ellett & Chloe Smith
South Australia - Elise Mann
Queensland - Stephanie Treharne

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Board of Directors

Iain MacKinnon - Chairperson
Adam Hanley - Treasurer
Tania Black - Secretary
Shiona Watson - Vice-Chairperson
Katherine Lustig
Stephen Wearing
Edmund Harvey

Partners

Australian Volunteers International
Mt. Theo - Yuendumu Substance Abuse
Aboriginal Corporation
Reto Juvenil Internacional - Costa Rica
University of Technology, Sydney
Youth Challenge Guyana
Youth Challenge International - Canada
Yuendumu Community Education Centre



YOUTH CHALLENGE AUSTRALIA Annual Review 2004-2005



Our Mission To engage and empower young people, through collaborative and sustainable work with communities, to create understanding and bring about positive change.

Our Vision An international community that celebrates its diversity, lives sustainably, and values the role of youth in society.

Our Values Respect - Equality - Opportunity - Integrity - Quality - Accountability

Executive Director and Chairperson's Report

Engaging young individuals in communities, working side by side towards a brighter future has kept YCA relevant to international community development. The sustained input YCA provides to local partners through volunteers and program assistance, underpinned by constant reference to our vision and values is consistently proving to be a successful model. Our strategic planning processes are building organisational sustainability, organisation presence, program quality and human resources. 2005-2006 holds much promise with an enthusiastic new team, strong direction and an inspiring volunteer network that defines the vision of YCA.

*INDU BALACHANDRAN (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)
IAN MACKINNON (CHAIRPERSON)*

Field Programs

Country	Vanuatu		Costa Rica		Guyana		Australia
	Australian	Ni-Vanuatu	Australian	Costa Rican	Australian	Guyanese	Australian
Challengers	25	36	61	5	10	14	14
Group Leaders	4	4	9	8		9	4

* Challengers from Canada collaborate on projects



Youth Challenge Australia - Central Australia

YCA's work in Yuendumu is integral to our vision of challengers engaging in their own communities. Challengers are involved through YCA in supporting education initiatives for indigenous youth. Living in Yuendumu, they work with the Community Education Centre and help run night-school with the Mt Theo Program to engage youth in creative education and development activities such as drama, music and IT. Community organisations such as the Art Centre have been able to utilise challengers' skills and interests in specific areas. Some volunteers have been inspired to embark on careers supporting indigenous development. YCA will continue to work closely with partners in Australia to further our vision in our own community.

"The work that YCA challengers do in Yuendumu makes a significant contribution to education of youth in the community." - Principal, School

Youth Challenge International - Vanuatu

Our program in Vanuatu focuses on primary health and education. The projects this past year were located in Tongoa, Malekula, Paama, Pentecost and Ambae and included Youth Skills Summits, construction of aid posts, water tanks and a kindergarten, improvement of pit toilets, early childhood learning awareness, library repair, and an anthropology research project. The small projects teams help to develop the leadership potential of local volunteers through involvement in projects including cataract screening and surgery and women's development. YCI-V is regarded as a premier youth NGO in Vanuatu, attracting support from organisations including AusAID, Oxfam, New Zealand Aid, Pacific Regional Health Project and Telecom Vanuatu Limited.

"Even after you arrived, we didn't believe that you would carry sand with us, but you did" - Laan Douglas (Community member, Ambrym).



Reto Juvenil International (Costa Rica)

YCA volunteers were involved in projects run over 15 locations including Bajo La Paz and Zapaton. Community facilities were built; Women in Action and Youth in Action conferences were organised; walking trails were built and repaired in national parks. RJJ works with a range of partners in the areas of health, women's initiatives, youth development, and environmental conservation including the Institute of Alcoholism and Pharmoco-dependence, the UNDP and Fundacion Mujer (Womens Foundation). Our Costa Rica projects are integral in involving younger, unskilled volunteers in team-based community development. This is made possible through the design of appropriate projects and a strong local organisation to facilitate effective outcomes.

"In my eyes, they have worked hard and produced successful results. They have put in a lot of effort and have become our friends. The cooperative work has been wonderful." - Adolfo Paisano Hernandez, Foreman (Carbon Dos)

Youth Challenge Guyana

Our work in Guyana addresses some of the most pressing issues in the country. Two projects involved tackling teenage pregnancy through education and awareness programs. A series of workshops and conferences were conducted in Central and North Rupununi and in Parishara. The Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS campaign in Sand Creek improved knowledge, understanding and awareness of the problem. Innovative tools were used, enabling youth to use initiative and creativity to design tools applicable to their culture and lifestyle. Partner agencies on these projects included the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association, the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security and the Canadian International Development Agency. Our Guyanese programs operate in remote areas, and require skilled and committed volunteers.

"We would like to have more workshops more often so as to educate us more." - Conference Participant, March 2005



Youth Challenge International - Canada

Our Canadian partner continues to support the work of the Alliance with its experience, enthusiastic staff and volunteers. It works closely with CIDA and other partners on programs that engender youth development through community development across the globe.

Highlights for the Year

- 107 volunteers contributed 1,014 weeks to development projects
- 26 international projects completed
- Yuendumu program established
- YCA newsletter receiving positive feedback from our 2,500 supporters