

COMMUNITY NEWS



YMCA of GREATER LONG BEACH • COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BRANCH • FALL 2014

Summer at the Community Development YMCA

- Bob Cabeza, Vice President of Community Development

It's been a very busy and amazing summer for the Community Development YMCA! We operated 18 Youth Institutes with our partners throughout the United States and went international with a NEW Youth Institute in Canada as well! We served over 600 middle and high school youth and taught them leadership skills, public speaking, literacy, technology and 21st century skills.

We took 17 adult professional volunteers to Cambodia and they helped the Cambodia YMCA and the Street Children's Schools there by both working directly with the youth and donating supplies, food and much-needed dollars.

Our Family Involvement programs are now operating with funding from LBUSD at three new school sites. We are doing parent trainings in leadership, education, supporting your child in school, etc. The schools we are working at are Wilson High School, Jackie Robinson K-8 and Perry Lindsey K-8 schools.

Change Agent Productions continues to create new contracts whether teaching technology for children at agencies such as Buena Clinton or the Children's Institute or making movies for the California Emerging Technology Fund or the Long Beach Community Foundation. They are a workforce skill-building program for our teens that graduate from the Youth Institute and help them use their skills in the real world of work.

The young staff and volunteers are committed to keeping both the innovation and quality programs moving forward and growing as we move into 2015. Thanks to all of the staff and Board for their leadership, wisdom and commitment to our youth and families!



2014 Long Beach Summer YI Staff

CONTACT

BOB CABEZA, Vice President of Community Development
E Bob.Cabeza@lbymca.org
P 562.624.5474

LES PETERS, Executive Director of Youth Institute and Curriculum Development
E Les.Peters@lbymca.org

MARISOL ZOBLER, M.S.W. Family Involvement Director
E Marisol.Zobler@lbymca.org

DANIEL MEZA, Senior Art Director • Change Agent Productions
E Daniel.Meza@lbymca.org

RON UNG, Logistics Director
E Ron.Ung@lbymca.org

MICHAEL OUN, Youth Institute Operations Director
E Michael.Oun@lbymca.org

WEB

www.lbymcai.org
www.ymcacambodiaproject.org
www.changeagentproductions.org

THANK YOU!

California Community Foundation - Education Collaborative

- Marisol Zobler, M.S.W.,
Family Involvement Director

It is with great gratitude that the Family Involvement Program concludes the Parent/Family classes with the Education Collaborative. The amazing Education Collaborative foundation provided funds for six great years in support of parent/family education at four elementary schools in LBUSD: Stevenson, International, Roosevelt, Burnett and Whittier (for the first three years of the grant).

During these past six years, we facilitated a variety of classes providing academic and social support to over 200 families per year. The series of classes taught included: Community Leadership Institute (a four month class), In Home Education (8 weeks), Family Literacy (8 weeks) and 8 Weeks to a Well Behaved Child (8 weeks). These topics were taught multiple times, and the curriculums were updated-revised regularly to serve the needs of both new and continuing participants.

The Family Involvement Program provided a comprehensive program to our families and their children, and served our parents' needs pertaining to crisis intervention, advocacy, resource refer-

ral, leadership and employment opportunities, and community mobilization. In addition, the program provided extensive training to our after school program staff, teachers and administrators in the schools that we serve on effective methods for engaging and involving parents.

As they say, all good things must come to an end. Since the grant will come to a close in October 2014, the Family Involvement program will no longer have the funding to continue to provide these services to the elementary schools noted above. We are now requesting that our collaborative schools contract with our program to absorb some of the costs so we can continue to provide some level of service. We are awaiting the affected schools to discuss this possibility in the coming weeks. As of now we have two contracts with a new school-partner, Jackie Robinson K-8, and it is our second year contracting with Wilson Classical High School.

In addition, we continue to partner with the Cal State Long Beach Department of Social Work, specifically with professor Dr. Julie O'Don-

nell's MSW Community School class, to provide parents with an opportunity to visit the university and meet with the MSW students. This fall, we will be transporting approximately 10 parents to the University, where they will share their experience in working with MSW students in the different projects in the past, as well as share their expertise in what works pertaining to helping families in need in the community.

We also recently accepted two social work interns. One intern will be placed at Wilson High, working with an intervention team. This MSW intern, the counselor, an intervention specialist along with our MSW, will provide support to students and families that have chronic absence history. The support may include phone calls, home visits, and referrals to other services as needed. The other intern will be placed with Family Involvement, and will provide parent workshops and crisis intervention support. This intern will also work with the Youth Institute program providing individual and group support, including academic tutoring and college readiness preparation.



Wilson HS Parent Group



Burnett Elementary Parents

A Cambodia Journey

- Ron Ung, Logistic Director

What an amazing year for the YMCA Cambodia Project! 17 individuals from across the country embarked on a transformational journey to Cambodia. From the get-go, the group of volunteers was heavily active in their local communities conducting fundraisers to raise awareness about the journey and volunteering their time in other communities. The team consisted of individuals of all backgrounds. There were youth, adults, Cambodians and non-Cambodians. Each uniting with a common mission to give back to those in poverty and learn from the children in Cambodia.

The journey itself was filled with a roller coaster of emotions. The team was tasked with raising \$3,600 each to pay for their two-week service learning and cultural exchange trip. The trip was all-inclusive from transportation, food, lodging, and a donation to help support the Cambodia YMCA Street Children School. For many, it was their first time fundraising and the amount seemed like a daunting task. There were days that the team felt confident in reaching their goals to days where they felt it was impossible. Triumphantly, the team met their goal with the help of our support in raising money for the trip.

During the trip itself, the team deeply bonded with the children of the Cambodia YMCA, conducting an array of activities from visiting the children in their school and home communities, donating school supplies, food, and clothes to doing teambuilding activities. Each one of us was able to connect with the children and understand the struggles that they face daily and how we can do more to learn about their needs and help.

Another big push that we did this year so that it was more inclusive was to collect donations from the community. These donations consisted of books, school supplies, clothes, shoes and toys. This year alone, we have shipped over 100 boxes, weighing over 1.5 tons to Cambodia. We currently have another 150 boxes ready to be shipped out in the fall. This could not have been possible without the help of all of our supporters and volunteers. At each fundraising event we did, donors brought items to donate and volunteers graciously stored the donations in their garages until it was time to ship out. In addition, the Mengly J. Quach Foundation provided the cost of shipping all of the donations. They are a partner of the YMCA Cambodia Project.

All in all, we were able to make a continued impact in not only our local community but also the global community. There were many successes, from the overwhelming support we received from the community to the lives of the 17 volunteers that were changed from their experiences on the ground in Cambodia. Perhaps the most important is our yearly involvement with the children of the Cambodia YMCA. Since July 2011, this has been our fifth trip to Cambodia. Because of our continued involvement, children in Cambodia are able to continue to receive a quality education, bond with overseas Cambodians that truly care about them and know that we will continue to be with them throughout their lives.

For more information about the YMCA Cambodia Project and to become involved, visit <http://fb.com/YMCACambodiaProject> or contact Ron Ung, Project Director at (562) 624-5467 or ron.ung@lbyymca.org.





Every year, the coming of autumn represents a fresh start for the staff at Change Agent Productions. The chaos of the summer Youth Institute has settled and the time to regroup, reform and rethink is the next order of business. This is a time for refinement, a time for restructuring and a time for resolve. Not only the physical space of the office is reimaged but our mental state of mind as well.

We begin by purging our studio and we inventory our equipment and make sure that it is all in good working order. This is necessary to make sure that we deliver the best quality product for our clients and the best experiences for our youth. Next we refine and rediscover our purpose; we ask ourselves questions like “Why do we exist?” and “What is our role not only in the lives of our youth but in the YMCA movement?” and “Are we staying true to our word?” It is things like this that really occupy the heart and soul of our work and what we do for our community. Change Agent Productions exists as an economic engine for our youth and the community we serve here in downtown Long Beach.

If the YMCA is our vehicle for serving youth, without a doubt our

clients are what fuels that vehicle. Without our clients, we simply cannot exist. It is always a pleasure to have clients come back to us year after year. We believe that our competitive edge is not only in our high quality work but also in our cause. There are very few functioning social-enterprises in the world and we are extremely proud to be among them.

For the third year, we are offering our expertise in Digital Media education to the Children's Institute, Inc. located in the heart of Los Angeles. The Children's Institute works with low-income families and foster youth to develop their social and academic skills. What we are providing this fall are 2 nine-week courses that focus on Digital Media Arts, social skill building and 21st Century skill building all packaged in projects that revolve around themes that will bring greater understanding to the world around them. The two cohorts serve different age groups and themes, which showcases the flexibility of our offerings.

On the horizon we also have pending trainings with our previous client in Nevada, the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. We are currently negotiating a renewal

contract with them and may soon be on retainer with them as their preferred contractor. This is really exciting news since this contract was among the most popular with our youth and the experiences that they gained training other teens surely impacted their lives. We also hope to renew our contract with the Buena Clinton Youth and Family Center doing Digital Media Trainings there. Their community is in dire need of both youth and adult trainings in Digital Media and in Digital Literacy.

Beyond our training contracts we have many video, website and animation projects coming our way. We will soon be partnering with Y-USA to produce a short film on HEPA (Healthy Eating Physical Activity), a website for our neighbors Californians Together, a film for our partner CETF on a recent forum for affordable broadband for all and will be sending the film to the FCC. Lastly, we are working with the California Association of School Social Workers to produce a program for their statewide conference as well as provide A/V services to them. We've got lots of good things coming our way!!!

**- Daniel Meza,
Senior Art Director**

Continuum of Support

- Les Peters, Executive Director of Youth Institute & Curriculum Development

The Youth Institute (YI) in Long Beach, was a success again this year under the leadership of Daniel, Ben (YI Class of 2003) and Jonathan (YI Class of 2001). They have proved themselves to have the desire and passion to carrying the torch for the next generation of young people.

In the 14 years, that I've been with the YI, I have seen it evolve into a continuum of support for young people all over the world. We have YI Alumni who have graduated from college, fought for our country, gotten married, started families, moved across the United States & to other countries, traveled overseas and purchased their own homes. They have become productive adults and all of them are giving back to help others. The foundation of the YI was to provide a safe, nurturing environment for young people to grown and learn life skills that would make them productive adults - it has begun.

We call it "Ladders to Leadership," giving young people the opportunity to gain life experiences to help them make the right choices as they develop into young adults. Those YI Alumni high school seniors who will be attending college in the fall are given the opportunity to mentor the next group of YI New Class & Alumni. As we select the summer YI staff, we look for those who have that "caring, kindness and compassion" attitude. Because they are the next generation who will evolve the YI into the next great thing. A wise person once said, "it's like investing in Penny stocks, most people won't see the value, but for those who nurture and support it will see it mature and grows into something great."

Those YI Alumni who have stayed in the area are the next generation of leadership for the YI movement. They are the core staff at the LB YI, digital media artists for Change Agent Productions, consultants for YI replication, program staff for elementary & middle school after school programs, campaign volunteers who raise money for the YI and provide youthful and passionate energy to the Board of Managers for the Community Development branch. 6 of the 15 Board of Managers are YI Alumni who have finished college and are working in their fields of study - Social Work, City Planning, Mechanical Engineering, Aerospace Engineering and Electrical Engineering.

This fall at the LB YI, we will be issuing "Digital Badges" to all the 2014 summer YI graduates. To recognize their accomplishments to furthering their learning in Digital Media Arts, 21st Century Learning Skills and the other core curriculum exercises of the summer YI. We are also providing an opportunity for our YI Alumni to tinker with various tools and hardware in our Applied Engineering club (maker space). Two of our YI Alumni from 2001, a mechanical engineer and aerospace engineer will be helping us with the club. In our Applied Engineering Club the YI Alumni will be learning the correct way of using hand & power tools, soldering, software programming, CAD and 3D printing.

To those older YI Alumni who are coming back after successfully navigating the adult world and gaining years of life experiences....Thank You. I see them in the YI lab sharing experiences & life lessons with the younger YI Alumni - that *continuum of support*, is alive and well at the Long Beach Youth Institute.



Some of the Digital Badges of the LB Youth Institute

“HOW CAN WE SERVE MORE YOUTH?”

- Les Peters, Executive Director of Youth Institute & Curriculum Development

We've just completed our 3rd year of YI Replication and it was a successful summer. Many of the replication sites are ready to operate independently of any YI consultants. Each of those sites have strong adult & youth leadership and have developed enough indigenous knowledge-base to now evolve the YI to meet the needs of their community and make it their own. One of our goals with YI replication was to work with each site for three years and then step away and let them run with it; as long as they maintain the YI framework as their foundation.

This summer we have added two more YI replication sites to the family: YMCA of San Diego County - Mission Valley and YMCA of Greater Vancouver - South Surrey, BC. The YMCA of Greater Vancouver is our first International YI site, but not our last. We have a strong interest from YMCA Australia and YMCA Colombia to develop a Youth Institute in their countries very soon. The impact of the YI is going global, like a virus

- infecting communities with young people who have skills sets to make social change.

Here in the States we have another 5-6 YMCA's that have come out to visit us from the East Coast, Mid-West, South, Pacific Northwest and are now convinced that the YI is needed in their communities.

Who would have thought 15 years ago that a idea written down on a napkin in McDonalds would create a movement, that started with 25 diverse young people in a metal building near the Port of Long Beach to become a International recognized Youth Development program that has worked with over 3,500 young people from around the world.

“How can we serve more youth?” was the comment every year, when we had to turn away youth for the LB YI because of limited resources. Now I can answer that question - “how can we serve more youth? - **YI REPLICATION!!**

2014 YI Replication Facts: 13 Cities, 18 Sites, 51 Staff, 550 Youth served

2015 Future Possible YI Replication Sites: South Bend, IN • Snoqualmie, WA • YMCA Australia • YMCA Colombia

