

# INTERNATIONAL YOUTH INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2014

LONG BEACH, CA • ANAHEIM, CA • BERKELEY, CA • EAST LA, CA • EAST PALO ALTO, CA • LOS ANGELES, CA • RAPID CITY, SD • SANTA ANA, CA • SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA • KIRKLAND, WA • SOUTH CENTRAL LA, CA • SAN DIEGO, CA • SURREY, BC, CANADA

## 2014 YOUTH INSTITUTE REPLICATION

by **Bob Cabeza**,  
Vice President of  
Community Development &  
Founder of Youth Institute

It was another successful year for the 18 Youth Institutes. This summer we added two new Youth Institute sites along with our original sites. The sites are San Diego YMCA Mission Valley Youth Institute and the Vancouver YMCA, Canada Youth Institute. We really have gone international.

Also seven of our sites have hit their three-year milestone of operating and are now ready to begin their independent programming without Long Beach YI Consultants. They are Cambria YI, East LA YI, South LA YI, Anaheim YI, Berkeley YI and THINK Together Valley and Century YI's. These sites may choose to still have consultants and also contract with the Long Beach YI for their Wilderness Retreats. Rapid City YMCA YI is still going strong and independent with high quality youth development structures and programs in place.

We are now looking for new funding to both grow the Long Beach Youth Institutes and directly support the other Youth Institute sites with funds as part of a large international youth program initiative collaboration. The Youth Institute once again has proven that it improves youth's outlook on both academics, their future and life. It also teaches high-end technology skills that are transferable both in academics and the workforce. Our youth throughout the collaborative are teaching thousands of other children, youth and adults digital literacy and youth development. We are helping to build digital knowledge for low-income families. Whether to access the Internet for a job, healthcare or education, we believe that young people hold keys to spreading broadband and technology awareness and skills throughout the world.



YI  
Retreat  
Week 1



YI  
Retreat  
Week 2



YI  
Retreat  
Week 3

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ANAHEIM FAMILY YMCA  
**YOUTH INSTITUTE**

by Alex Chung,  
 YI Director

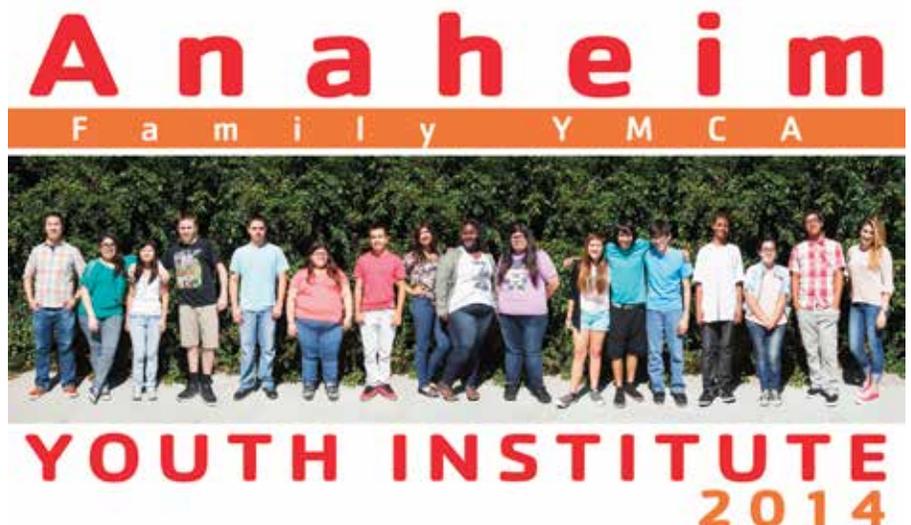


This is the third summer the Anaheim Family YMCA has run the Youth Institute program. Over the years it has become a distinguished program in the community. The Anaheim Family YMCA formed a partnership with the City of Stanton to hold the lab in a city building. The city was impressed with what the program offered to high school students.

During the first week of programming, our youth went to the Wilderness Retreat as strangers and came back as a family. While they had their struggles, they also had their triumphs. The bonds they formed made them closer and they were able to overcome their obstacles during the summer as they worked on their projects. This summer, students' films ranged from different genres such as Western, comedy, and drama. The Youth Institute's magazine took an innovative turn as it was designed as a flip magazine: one side for New Class articles, the other for Alumni articles. The tasks they were assigned could not have been accomplished if they had not worked as a team.

Even as the summer program winds down, the youth are already planning their short film projects that will be showcased at the end of the school year. Students have now taken the initiative to work on their own projects and become independent. These skills will not only apply to their Youth Institute projects but also their school work and everyday life.

The Anaheim Family YMCA is looking forward to seeing the projects the youth have in store for the year to come. As the program grows, so do our youth.



# 1. resilience

ri'zilyens, the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness:

This summer was defined by that one word. From the five alumni returning from last year's class of seven, to the additional new class participants, our youth shared struggles and obstacles they had overcome, along with those they were currently battling. Additionally, our newly formed program family, including staff, would also be tested when our teen center was broken into and our laptop computers were stolen.

Many would think this was our defining moment. It was the incident most talked about. It gained media and news attention. It had the phones ringing and social media posts flying, but our defining moments gained far less attention. Here are just a few of them:

During our wilderness retreat at Camp Wenatchee, there were no camera's to capture the powerful moment when one of our alumni purposely chose the wrong path in the teambuilding exercise the "Devil's Maze" only so she could go back and help her fellow classmates complete the task, because she in fact



knew the correct course. There were no flashing lights when youth shared personal stories of abuse, addiction, family death, foster care, and court battles. And there certainly were no news headlines touting the compassion and human spirit when once strangers, now hugged each other, shared tears, and showed support for the courage and bravery it took to share. There were no marquee lights, saying "genuine friendships made here," or "welcome to the Youth Institute". Yet without the fanfare, these moments far outshined anything pomp and circumstance could provide.

For the YMCA KTUB and Youth Institute staff, there was no award given, when they reacted on their feet after the break-in, planned an impromptu field trip for the youth, handled media attention, detectives, and many questions, some staff even coming in on their day off on their own volition, because their home had been violated. There was no applause for the donors, community members, businesses, and parents, offering to raise money, to spread awareness, anything to help. Or when current KTUB youth and former alumni came out in force begging to help in any way. Could they do a bake sale, benefit concert, anything?



I am proud to shine a little light on the TRUE defining moments of the Youth Institute of 2014. To hold a graduation ceremony that recognized 17 young people who wrote a 24 page magazine, made over 6 films, explored academic options available to them, stepped outside their comfort zone, grew, overcame, challenged, and supported one another. I was proud to work alongside a staff team that was dedicated, creative, driven, and full of heart. I was proud to call the Eastside and Kirkland our community, full of partners, adults, and resources that showed tireless energy in supporting our youth. I am and was tremendously proud of resilience that lead 17 young people to and, most importantly, THROUGH the YMCA Youth Institute of 2014. No, our defining moment was certainly not the weakness of one. Our defining moment was absolutely the strength of many.

YMCA of Greater Long Beach

**STEPHENS YOUTH INSTITUTE**

Community Development

by **Catrina Curato,**  
YI/EPIC Staff

Cheers to Stephens youth and staff!

Another successful year for our Stephens Middle School new class, alumni, and staff! This year we finished the Stephens 2014 Youth Institute Program strong with 33 participants: 24 New Class and 9 Alumni. Each day our youth were challenged to think beyond their neighborhood, and consider what kinds of impacts they wanted to make on their community. As they tackled their Youth Magazine, each youth chose a topic that highlighted something special about their interests. Whether it was about sports, make-up, sexual abstinence, or world domination, our youth were given the opportunity to speak to the world through an article. Their magazine proved to be an amazing completion of real world issues and appreciation for cultures, #worldcupfans! Check out the awesome cover, props to the creative and sagacious CHANDANI BAWA!

Chandani, and her colleagues, were Stephens' saving grace. Fun Fact: Chandani, along with her fellow staff: Christian Magallanes, and Vanessa Ledesma are Stephens Middle School YI graduates and alumni giving back to their Alma Matter. Now, although Noel "baby squirrel" aka "squirrel" Gonzalez is a Hughes YI alumnus, he was accepted as an honorary Stephens ambassador, and a highly popular actor in nearly all-6 YI films this year. Good job and thanks Noel! Keep an eye out for future YI productions this year!!





by **Daniel Meza,**  
**LB Summer**  
**Youth Institute Director**

The Youth Institute is more than a youth development program; the Youth Institute is a family. In 8 short weeks, friendships are forged that may last a lifetime. From the humble beginnings at camp to the struggles of filmmaking and team work, Youth Institute participants are challenged to get to know each other and themselves. The Youth Institute is a legacy not only in Long Beach but in each of our partner sites and the movement grows stronger with each passing year.

This year was no different in Long Beach. With 55 new youth and 40 returning alumni, the Long Beach Youth Institute was packed from open to close. There were emotional highs and lows and when the dust settled, we had an amazing magazine, 10 youth films on topics ranging from Bullying to Domestic Violence to Dating and 4 Alumni films revolving around Alternative Transportation, Air Quality, Restorative Justice and School Reform.

Not only did our youth visit CSULB this past summer but they were fortunate enough to have Eddie Gardiner give them the lowdown on attending and affording college and Jack Dilday visited twice to give seminars on communicating effectively. These youth will continue on their paths through life and we are confident to say that this summer gave them the tools to make good decisions when they reach those crossroads.

The summer is not just about digital media or media creation, it's about the little things that keep us smiling, keep us engaged and coming back for more. We had youth who came from broken homes and found solace at the YI. We had youth who found like-minded friends when they believed that they were alone. This is what comprises the core of the Youth Institute.

During the summer, one of our Youth had their bicycle stolen during lunchtime. In fact it wasn't even their bike,

it was their father's bike. Anyone who had ever borrowed something from someone and lost it knows the feeling that I'm describing; You can be sure that tears were shed. How did the Youth respond to the theft? Did they say "sorry" and move on with their own lives? Did they care?

They started a pool to see if they could raise enough money to replace the bike. They would share lunch or order from the dollar menu for a day to donate what they could. Over the course of two weeks, they were on their way and by the third week, they had raised \$250 between them and made it right. In what world other than the Youth Institute does things like this happen?

The summer Youth Institute not only provides a platform for youth development for our high school age youth but for our college age youth as well. All 8 of our staff this Summer were graduates of the Youth Institute themselves and understand what it takes to get through the challenges of the YI. Becoming a staff member of the Long Beach Youth Institute is entering the next level of Youth Development. They are challenged to lead others, they are challenged to think before they act and are challenged to care for others before they care for themselves. I am proud to say that every staff member at the Long Beach Youth Institute exceeded my expectations of responsibility and truly demonstrated caring, compassion and kindness toward the next generation of Alumni. This was their chance to pay it forward and every staff member stepped up to the challenge and hit a home run.

We wish the best of luck to our newly anointed alumni of the Long Beach YMCA Youth Institute, our returning Alumni and our college bound Youth in all their future endeavors. We hope to be a guiding light for them all as they navigate through high school and post-secondary education.



WEINGART EAST LOS ANGELES

# YOUTH INSTITUTE

YMCA OF METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES

**by Emmanuel Icaza,  
Youth Institute Program Staff**

Entering our third summer at the Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA Youth Institute presented itself with new challenges and opportunities. Just a few months prior to the launch of the Summer Youth Institute, the WELA YMCA was busy opening a new facility housed inside of The Wellness Center at the Historic General Hospital. With this new addition to the WELA YMCA we were able to open up a new office for the Youth Institute Alumni to call home.

David and myself listened to the alumni's needs and we were able to build the new office to help fill some of the needs of the community and our youth. We ended up building a new creative space with a computer lab, white board walls for brainstorming, a lounge and thinking area, a small recording studio and a fully functional presentation space. Once the wilderness retreat ended it was our chance to finally put this new creative lab to use.

The Alumni arrived Monday morning eager and ready to start

making their movies, but I had a new surprise for them. David had invited a guest to teach them how to silk screen movie posters. Over the course of the summer we spent a couple hours a week designing and screening movie posters. The youth learned the entire process of creating movie posters. They brainstormed ideas on how the poster could capture the essence of their films and used illustrator to draft layouts for the final product. They then learned how to make a screen and how to separate the layers in their posters to create the final image for their poster. Next came putting the actual colors down on the paper and doing the "pull" to create unique and individual movie posters. Each production team had an opportunity to design a poster and physically put the screens and color down themselves. Doing the silkscreen movie posters was a huge hit with the alumni. All of their movie posters turned out fantastic, and serve to really showcase the hard work they put into creating

their movies.

In keeping with the message of Building Healthy Communities, all of our alumni films and articles were centered on creating a healthier Boyle Heights. Through their exploration and a partnership with the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, our Youth Institute was able to learn about some of the different issues that face communities like Boyle Heights. They learned about food scarcity and how Boyle Heights is considered a food desert. Taking their newfound knowledge, one of the production teams decided they wanted to make their film about this topic, creating a fictional story about a boy in search of rare fruits and vegetables. Kevin's Quest highlights the difficulty families in our community face in order to get healthy food options.

The closing of the Summer Youth Institute is always bitter-sweet. This summer, the Alumni had many more tasks and objectives to complete, and I can proudly say they all rose to the challenge.



TONG LOUIE FAMILY YMCA

# YOUTH INSTITUTE

YMCA OF GREATER VANCOUVER

by Jethro Kambere,  
Youth Institute Director



We started off our inaugural Youth Institute with a bang, travelling to Camp Elphinstone, on the Sunshine coast for our wilderness retreat. There, the youth had the opportunity to get in touch with nature, participating in nature hikes, high rope and low rope obstacle courses, sailing and building strong bonds at the end of the day at camp fires. It was an amazing experience and a great way to start of the youth institute.

Our first week we spent time getting familiar with the equipment and learning how to use Photoshop, Powerpoint, iMovie and Garageband. We got to practice our skills, learning how to make object films and different instrumental beats. As we perfected our skills it was time to move on to filming our group movies and making our magazine articles, which two of our group members help put together. The experience of filming and editing our movies was tons of fun. One group focused on leadership in their movie and the other group focused on community, and I must say both films turned out to be excellent portrayals of their themes.

We ended off our inaugural year with our graduation, where we received awards, certificates and got to eat lots of food and say our good byes to Braulio and the program for this year. Overall the experience was magnificent and worthwhile!



YMCA of RAPID CITY  
**YOUTH INSTITUTE**

**by Anthony Raaphorst,  
 YI Teen Site Coordinator  
 and Rebecca Egbert,  
 YI Staff**



Rapid City's Youth Institute had its 3rd Annual Graduation ceremony on August 1st. We showed five Alumni films and six Class of 2014 films. These were the largest classes we have had. Graduation capped off a busy and exciting summer.

In the last minute, we were able to hire Ben and KT, who have been with our program since the beginning as members of the First Class, as staff members for the summer. Our camping trip was at a different campsite and it was a good challenging week for all of us. Both the teens and

staff were pushed outside of their comfort zone. One of the teens shared he had never gone camping before and he LOVED the experience! Another change for us this year was having the Class of 2014 be all middle school students. They met the challenges we put in front of them. They all learned new computer programs. Most of them said their favorite part of the summer was the movie making.

The Alumni Class kept improving their skills they learned last year. They all had to teach a lesson to the Class of 2014. It was amazing to watch them teach and remember they were learning the same things just a year ago! As I watched their interaction with the Class of 2014, I finally understood what Bob Cabeza and Les Peters meant by peer mentors. The members of the Class of 2014 were going to the Alumni with questions instead of the staff!

We had the opportunity to visit Lasting Memories, a local photography studio in which we learned about different lighting styles and techniques. Chris Hornick, a local graphic designer, came in and showed how he uses the same software we teach at YI in his daily job. His presentation brought real-world application to what we are teaching. We toured the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology's campus. One of the most exciting parts of the summer for me was we were able to publish two magazines, one for the Class of 2014 and an Alumni magazine.

The summer has come to an end, but the school year is starting up soon. The teens have listed several projects they would like to work on. I am looking forward to see how their projects turn out. You can too find out if you visit our Facebook page: [rapidcitysdyi](https://www.facebook.com/rapidcitysdyi).



YMCA of SILICON VALLEY

# YOUTH INSTITUTE

LEWIS AND JOAN PLATT EAST PALO ALTO FAMILY YMCA

by Cesar Cruz,  
YI Consultant

East Palo Alto is home of strong, creative and loving teens. Being the first replication site by Greater Long Beach YMCA Youth Institute and moving into its 5th year within the Lewis and Joan Platt East Palo Alto Family YMCA, the program has seen so much change and growth throughout the years. With new staff and a whole new set of teens, we planned to kick off the summer with a bang. Our awesome teens have spent their summer working hard and improving their digital media skills, as well as building a family.

Here, they come to unwind, hang out with peers, and enjoy themselves in a safe environment. The Lewis and Joan Platt East Palo Alto Family YMCA is a great facility that offers many activities outside of technology. The city has built a skate park equipped with ramps and rails, which allow the youth to practice their skills in an open environment. Inside the Y, a donated rock wall from the Reid Sanders family excites members of all ages to reach great heights along with other great in-home opportunities like the pool and family gym.

This summer, the EPA teens faced many challenges. They endured a week of camping in Mammoth Lakes; exercising their communication skills and bonding with one another. At camp they were faced team building games that challenged them to work and strategies with their peers. Without

their cell-phones, Internet or any form of social media, some found it hard to handle being in nature but ended up seeing the beauty of it. Many have never seen the night sky the way it's meant to be seen; lit with trillions of stars and blanketed by blackness. Some have never smelled fresher air that can't be compared to the salty air from the Bay. Teens brought back home more than they imagined; stories, memories and a newfound respect for the outdoors. We built a circle of trust and we focused on the importance of trust and responsibility as a community. Without those things the circle would break and the group would crumble. During campfire the teens were able to empty their emotional trashcans, on the drive back you could see the difference, bonding, laughing, treating each other as brothers and sisters.

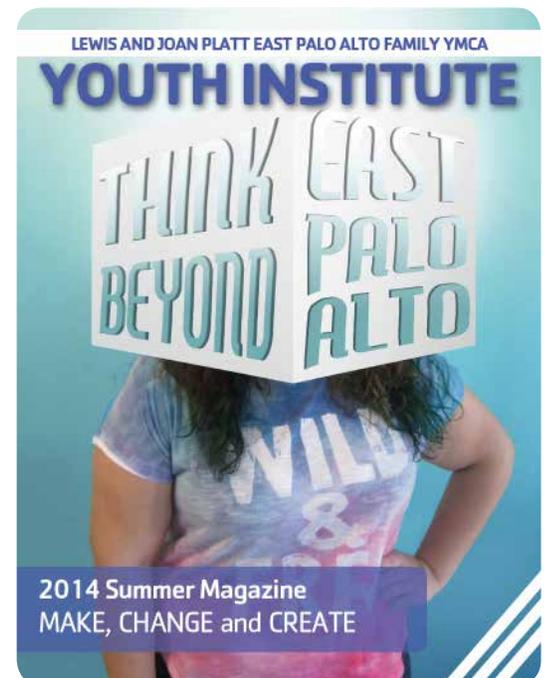
We were small in numbers, but strong in dedication. The summer posed an even bigger challenge when more than half of our group headed back to school a third of the way through the program.

We buckled down and went into overdrive. Our returning Alumni out did themselves, being a great asset. Alfonzo, Diana, Rosemary, Jennifer and Jazmin made the work seem like anything, but work. They gave a great example of what dedication and hard work

looks like. They taught, challenged, and supported each new peer.

Teens like Maura showed us that teens have important stories to tell just like any other adult. Maura truly inspired us and even challenged us. We had lots of laughs with Cristian, Eduardo and Carlos. We uncovered the leadership skills of Alejandro and Fernando. We taught them all to love learning and have fun doing it.

The youth have grown in the past two months; accomplishing greatness. They have learned to express themselves creatively through the digital arts, learned to how to work as a team using 21st century skills. Their light shined as bright as the stars at night. Without them, our 5th year would have not been such a success.





# International YOUTH INSTITUTE

Showcase • August 2014 • Long Beach, CA

Saturday, August 30th, 2014 | 9:00am to 2:00pm | 525 East 7th Street, Long Beach, CA



**Congratulations!** to all of the Youth Institute Replication sites for a successful 2014 summer. Once again we are the largest producer of “teen digital media content” in the world - 300+ teen short films and 17 teen magazines. We would like to thank everyone who attended the Showcase this year and we wish you all the success for the coming year and beyond.



## YI News

### 2014 YOUTH INSTITUTE REPLICATION SITES

13 Cities, 18 Sites, 51 Staff, 550 Youth served

**YMCA OF GREATER LONG BEACH**  
ST. LUKE'S • STEPHENS MS

**THINK TOGETHER, INC**  
CENTURY HS • VALLEY HS

**YMCA OF METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES**  
EAST LA • SOUTH CENTRAL LA • CRENSHAW

**ANAHEIM FAMILY YMCA**  
ANAHEIM • STANTON

**YMCA OF THE CENTRAL BAY AREA**  
PG&E TEEN CENTER BERKELEY

**YMCA OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**  
SANTA LUCIA MS • CAMBRIA HS

**YMCA OF SILICON VALLEY**  
EAST PALO ALTO

**YMCA OF GREATER SEATTLE**  
KIRKLAND TEEN UNION BUILDING (KTUB)

**YMCA OF RAPID CITY**  
RAPID CITY

**YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY**  
MISSION VALLEY

**YMCA OF GREATER VANCOUVER • CANADA**  
SOUTH SURREY

- **RAPID CITY YOUTH INSTITUTE** is available to provide all your silkscreening needs. Support their *Social Enterprise* by ordering your next YI t-shirts & polos from them. Contact Anthony Raaphorst - [anthonyr@rcymca.org](mailto:anthonyr@rcymca.org) for a price quote.
- **LONG BEACH YOUTH INSTITUTE** this Fall will be issuing *Digital Badges* to all it's 2014 New Class and Alumni who graduated from the summer Youth Institute. "Digital Badges are an assesment and credentialing mechanism that is house and managed online." The YI Digital Badges validate an accomplishment, skill, knowledge and competencies in digital media arts, leaderships & communication skills and other skills sets learned during the summer YI program. Those YI replication sites that want to participate in the Digital Badges - contact Les Peters - [Les.Peters@lbyymca.org](mailto:Les.Peters@lbyymca.org) for more information.

