

STORIES COMMUNITY FUTURE



YOUTH INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

Winter 2011 • Vol. 10 • Issue 4

OUR STORIES, COMMUNITY AND FUTURE • A newsletter for our Alumni, Friends and Supporters of the Youth Institute

Community Service

by *Dasire'e N.* • *YI Class of 2008*

Community Service is voluntarily donated time and work intended to help in a particular area for the benefit of the public.

My name is Dasire'e and I have been in the YMCA Youth Institute for five years. Since I've been in the high school program for the past three years, I have had the opportunity to participate in services that I have found as a benefit to my community. Being able to work with younger youth, has allowed me to gain a perspective on how I should decide to better the future. My hope is to influence not just a few, but many. I feel as though I want to leave a deep imprint on the things and people around me. Through the experience I've gained in the Youth Institute, it has shown me that it is possible.

The Youth Institute had given youth like me opportunities such as, the Annual Family Haunted House which is not only set up by teens along with the help of staff, but it also features teens as ghouls and goblins of the night. Hours are earned each night as we help fund the program to gain more opportunities to travel and intern. We also have a Family Picnic each year, teens help set up booths and help provide guides for families when the big day comes. The picnic allows families to come together and enjoy a relaxing day with food and games. During the year we are also giving opportunities to teach elementary school children computer technology skills. For a month we gain service learning hours by showing and teaching what we have learned from the Youth Institute. In a way it is a simple cycle of learning, understanding and giving.

Apart from teaching to others, one has to also be taught. Teaching others information has given me knowledge of patience and participation. When working with other people, I have found that it is important to get along. This also helps me get prepared for future jobs. Being able to cooperate makes the job easier for not only me, but the others around me. At the end of the day, I feel accomplished because I could have participated in other service learning opportunities, but this YMCA Youth Institute allows me to be able to volunteer in opportunities that are more connected to my interests.



YOUTH INSTITUTE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 2011

- Tomorrow Starts Now Campaign
- Youth Institute Summer Application out 02/01/11
- MOLAA Film Festival 02/03/11

March 2011

- Youth Institute Applications Due 03/01/11
- AMP UP! Middle School Conference - San Diego 03/8-10/11

April 2011

- Battle of the Bands 3 - TBA
- AB540 Conference @ LBCC

May 2011

- 10th Anniversary Youth Institute Dinner - TBA

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Campus Life

By Romana V. • YI Class of 2007

As an undergraduate at Cal State Long Beach and resident living on off-site dorms called Residential Learning College, I would encourage others to seek higher education. RLC is a new facility that encompasses the experience of attending a University while having the advantage of a secondary college on-site. My schedule is balanced out between school and work, so my studies will not be affected. If that would ever happen I would stop working to focus on my studies. I met so many people just in the first week, so imagine how many more I will meet in my years at Cal State Long

Beach. I'm excited of finally being able to manage life according to my needs. Many people didn't want me to go because they feared that once I was given total liberty I would stray from my goal of being the first college graduate of my family and a studious, hard working and outgoing role model for my sisters. Many people say the dorms are uncomfortable but I say that they are cozy and provide the students with an enriching environment.

As a Cabrillo high school alumnus, I enjoy being in a college campus because it is filled with students who seek to be challenged instead of being out of the radar. The difference between high school and college is the focus of all the students.

They are able to balance academic with other interests of theirs such as extracurricular activities. The thing I miss the most about high school were the free books that were assigned to us as opposed to colleges where each student is required to obtain the course textbook at their own expense. The good thing about that is that it is our own, so we don't have to worry about the condition of the book when we give them back. If books are too expensive for your budget or you just really don't want to have a book that is not your favorite subject, then I suggest that you make friends with the students in your class and make copies of the assigned pages of the text books.



College Experience

By Eddie M. • YI Class of 2006

Making that transition from high school to college is pretty awkward at first. Being in college is mostly doing independent work unlike in high school where they guide you through everything. In college it is your responsibility to make sure you notify your professor of your absences and get any work or notes that you missed that day. A class has about 50 students or more and the Professors cannot keep track of every student. In high school you are limited in your independence. When teachers want to discipline you they will either write you a demerit or send you to OCS (on campus suspension). In college they won't do that. It is completely your choice to be there and learn. In college if you don't turn something in you'll receive your grade based on what you have and the Professors grading rubric. Simple as that the only consequence is failing for not being able to follow through and take responsibly for your own actions. You are paying to be in college so if you're not going to try why bother going?

College is optional. You go to continue your education and better yourself. So far as to my experience in college it has been good, I am an independent person so college is suitable for me. I was able to set up my schedule to the times that were best for me and not interfere with work. College is both fun and hard work. Its up to me that I get my work done on time and keep up with my studies and work.

Reflections of the New Class

By Akira N. • YI Class of 2010



I've been coming to the YMCA Youth Institute (YI), since September of 2008. I was scared at first, seeing all the kids that were so different from one another acting like best of friends, I wasn't used to that at all. I eventually became a regular guest at the YI and had put it in my mind that I absolutely had to join this program. Sadly though, I had missed the deadline for new class of 2009. Though, I suppose that was for the best, what ever happened was meant to happen, that's how I saw it anyway. I ended up joining a year after in 2010, although during the years of '09-10' I help out with a lot of their events. My friends who were alumni had told me about what happens in the YI program, it didn't sound to hard, I was mistaken.

I ended up learning a lot about myself during the summer program, and it all started the day we got on a bus to Kings Canyon National Park. Seven hours on a bus with a bunch of strangers isn't easy, so I felt kind of bad for those new class that really were new to everything. It must have been awkward for me because I knew most of the alumni. Plus, for hanging out with the YI Alumni for so long, I wasn't that afraid to introduce myself to others. I was ready for a mind-blowing experience or so I assumed. It wasn't an easy task living in the wilderness with people who you may be bias towards or uncertain about. Now, I had said that I had no problem introducing myself, but what I didn't say was that I

wasn't exactly good at maintaining the conversation. Even though I knew their name, things were still awkward. That was only having to get to know them though, within the week we had to climb a mountain, build a dam in the river to bathe in and not that it was planned, but our trusted staff defended us from bears who entered our campsite. Just like anything at the YI we got through it, together and when it was time to leave the mountains. I had a sort of home sick feeling about the situation at hand.

The instant I hit the asphalt of the parking lot, I knew that I had just finished the easy part of the program; the hardest was yet to come.

During the next few weeks we were taught the basics of many programs, included Photoshop, InDesign, Dreamweaver and other Adobe software programs. Needless to say it was a lot to take in, luckily for us we were working in groups and generally people tend to be more interested in one program more than another; for me Photoshop and Dreamweaver are the programs I like. After learning the programs we began the real work, creating a story for our movie. In order to do that we had to learn camera angles, lingo, story board, and the skeletal structure of a good story. It wasn't easy, especially for those who hate writing. My group in particular had to scrap three stories, till almost right down to the deadline, we came up with "Rubrix," which ended up being the title of our movie. Our movie in

the end, became a experimental type, unlike the other movies, we actually enjoyed making it! At the end, sadly, is when I really started getting to know the kids in my new class. Funny thing is, when I was camping I swore I would never understand these people and a real good friend of mine told me that I would understand them, eventually and most likely when I least expect it. The end was drawing near, graduation was coming and finally after nearly two years I was going to become a real member of the Youth Institute.

The high lights of the graduation were all I seemed to remember; it went by almost instantly only leaving traces of happiness. I particular remember not hearing Bob when he had complimented my website and I had to be told by my friends and cousin to stop talking and acknowledge what was going on. Having my family watch my movie and actually being proud of it, was definitely something I had never done before - seeing as how my family lives three hours away and when I walked up those stairs I felt pure joy. All I could do was smile, laugh and smile some more. I was happy I suppose, but what could one expect, I had been waiting for this for two years. How was I not going to be ecstatic when I was handed my certificate, magazine, DVD and stipend! Most people that join the YI don't stick around, for most its just a summer job. As for me, I don't ever see myself leaving, accept for when I go to college or home. You hear stories all the time about all that a program has done for a child and you think it's all staged. Trust me, I thought the same thing too, until I had joined one. Now, I don't think I'll ever be the same. I'm never going to leave this place, it's a part of me now and I love it!



My Experience as a Change Agent

by: Jose L. • YI Class of 2009

Being a Change Agent Intern this summer was fun because I had a chance to learn professional photography skills at a photo shoot that Phyras took me to. The first thing we did was take pictures of the families outside. The families loved us and had a fun time when we were taking pictures. They really wanted us to take more but we had to leave, there was only so much time and so little time to take them. The project was called "Families in Schools."

The other project was for a company called Olive Crest. That company wanted solo pictures of all their staff and that was more difficult because we had to set up a backdrop. The backdrop is when you put a blanket/sheet in the back, so you can see them really good and this allows you to change the color of the picture in Photoshop. They wanted us to take the photos for their company identification cards.

I also helped with "Hire a Youth" summer youth workforce program, by teaching some of the software programs. There was one program called Cinema4D, that is basically making 3D objects animated on the computer. I also had to be 'the big brother' and make sure none of the youth were on the Internet and on any of the social networking sites when there was a staff teaching them. Most of the youth in the program were older than me and some were younger or the same age as me. That made me think about things like I could teach kids how to use the same programs that the professionals use in the industry. That was my summer as a Change Agent Intern.



by: Melissa C. • YI Class of 2008

Being a senior this year, I wanted to make a difference in how student council runs things and make an impact on how the student body lives their life at Millikan High School. In the school year of 2008-2009 I ran for junior president and was elected. I felt really proud of myself to obtain that position, but then I started to notice that I really don't have that freedom to make big decisions. So I decided to take a big step and take on the responsibility and I ran for ASB vice-president. Campaigning was tough as another girl wanted to take on that same responsibility as I did. So I did the best I could, did a fair campaign and won the election. I felt so many emotions that day for I knew that I had the power to better the students' high school life.

My duty as Vice-President is to accompany the President in running class meetings. Meetings consist of informing the student council class on what is going on around school and what events are going to take place. I am also in charge of putting the student council in committees and record their service learning hours.

Once in a while the President and I along with other two cabinet members which include the secretary and the treasurer have meetings with our adviser and talk about things such as the student body's response to our events, the effort the members of student council are putting in to our events, improvements we need to make and future events coming along. It is also my duty to be a leader and role model to the student council and the student body. One of the other things that I must do is when the President is absent or handling some work, I have to step in and be in charge of class and the production that goes on within the class.

Once in a while the cabinet, which includes Vice-President, has to attend site council, which are meetings with administrators where they decide whether or not they pass certain things, and I am involved in the vote. Being ASB vice-president is a lot of work and responsibility, but because of the passion and love I have towards being a leader, it is the role I have decided to play.

A Youth Institute Kind of Holiday



The Youth Institute threw a Thanksgiving dinner for all the Alumni in the program!



DJ, Danny, Chandani, Jasmine, Michelle, & John ate and designed their own ornaments for the trees at the Holiday Party.



Josue and Angela reunite after a long year of their new college.



Leonard, Bob, Phyras, and Les get ready to hand everyone their gifts.



Conrad, David, James, and Seena wait in line for dinner, but pose for a quick pic!

"This was my first Y.I. Holiday party and it was very special to me. I like reconnecting with everyone from my class and talking about the fun summer we had. Good times!"

- James S. • Class of 2010

**FOR MORE PHOTOS AND UPDATES,
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.LBYMCAYI.ORG OR
WWW.CHANGEAGENTPRODUCTIONS.ORG**



Christian, Bob, and Jose reunite after a couple of months of being busy with school and sports.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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LONG BEACH, CA. 90813

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Summer Reflection As Alumni

by Samar B. • Yi Class of 2009

Last year as New Class, staff held our hands and guided us. This year as summer Alumni we guided each other. Coming into the alumni position this summer was great. I got an opportunity to work with a new production group, DeepWoodz Productions. I entered as a new member and girls welcomed me with open arms. Working with DeepWoodz Productions has been quite an experience. Each member held a different ability that they brought to the table. Because we were so different we worked better as a team, because we contributed multiple ideas we worked better as a team. Although, we were

confident and prepared to work as a group, many often doubted us. But we proved ourselves and excelled to the top and our movie turned out to be one of the best. It was not easy but we managed. The majority of the time we messed around and people didn't take us seriously. But little did they know, work got done and it worked. That was our way of saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover." Just because we consisted of all woman doesn't mean we weren't capable of getting our work done.

As Alumni you learn to not only play the role as a leader but to work as a team. And that is exactly what each group did; we played hard but worked harder. And at the end of the day, the finished products turned out great.

