

↑Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

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Monthly eNewsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs
June 2014

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Nov 3-28: 32nd Advanced Studies Programme, Wu Kwai Sha, Hong Kong

Announcement: APAY 32nd Advanced Studies Program

We are pleased to inform all the national YMCA movements of our region that the 32nd Advanced Studies Program, will be held during 3rd – 28th November 2014 (Arrival on 2nd November and Departure on 29th November 2014). The venue of the program shall be at YMCA Youth Village, Wu Kwai Sha, Ma On Shan, NT. Hong Kong.

This year the curriculum of the Advanced Studies Program shall focus on (i) Basic YMCA Studies, such as Mission of the YMCA, Contextual Theology, Social Analysis, (ii) Spiritual Development (iii) Alternative YMCA Responses to the social Issues and (iv) Governance & Organizational Development in the YMCA.

The Advanced Studies Program is conducted at the Post Graduate level. Applicants should be at least graduates, i.e. holding a Bachelor's Degree from a recognized university, should have at least three-years' successful working experience as a full time YMCA staff at a senior executive position and have completed the Basic YMCA Training Program or its equivalent.

Detailed information of the Advanced Studies Program will be sent to the national movements within mid June 2014 and the last date for receiving applications is on 31st July 2014. The cost components of the course are Registration Fee US\$ 365 (including Green Fund) and Participation Fee US\$ 1,600 plus the cost of air travel.

APAY believes that professional development of the staff ensures healthy development and sustainability of the YMCA in the long term. This is an advance notification so that the national movements may start the process of selecting appropriate candidates for the program. Please feel free to contact our office if you have any queries or need any clarifications.

~ Duncan Chowdhury, Executive Secretary

Message from GS: "Youth Development as our Number One Priority versus our Reality"

As I introduced the results of the survey questionnaire in April, we were able to get almost 300 respondents, and they had chosen top ten YMCA priorities out of 26 given issues and concerns. Out of 300 respondents, 92 respondents were young people and 104 were from decision

making groups including Board members and GS/NGS members of the national or local YMCAs. I present here the comparison of the priorities of the two groups as the next agenda of the YMCA.

Decision Making Groups (total of 104 people)

Youth Group (total of 92 people)

1. Youth development

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2. Sustainable YMCA management

2. Environment

3. Lay/ Staff leadership development

3. Global Citizenship

4. Spirituality Development

4. Child protection

5. Strategic Planning

5. Advocacy Work

6. Governance

6. Early Childhood Education

7. Resource Mobilization

7. Sustainable management

8. Environment

8. Justice and Peace

9. Global Citizenship

9. Alternative Tourism

10. Social Enterprises

10. Value Education

Here I would like to share my thoughts from the survey results as follows:

* Young people are more interested in issues, problems of their own country, such as environment, child protection, early childhood education and justice / peace, etc.

* Therefore the youth selected youth development, Global Citizenship, Advocacy work, Alternative Tourism and Value Education as higher priorities since those are closely related to the issues they chose.

* The young people also know the Sustainable YMCA Management (as 7th priority) as the condition of the YMCA to do more work for the communities.

On the other hand, those decision making group (Board members and GSs) see the priorities little differently.

* The decision making group focused more on Sustainable YMCA Management #2, Lay/staff Leadership Development #3, Strategic Planning #5, Governance #6, Resource Mobilizations #7 in their top ten priorities. While young people see the Sustainable management as #7 and the others were: Lay Development #11, Strategic Plan #17, Governance #14, and Resource Mobilization as #12.

* What we could tell from the above is that the interest and reason for coming YMCA for the young people is not for the YMCA but for more learning skills and doing something for the communities.

* In regard to the sustainable development of the YMCA, leadership succession is absolutely necessary for the future YMCA strategies. Without a good succession plan and such structure of the YMCA, there will be no hope for the sustainability of the YMCA.

As a conclusion, we need to ask questions to our Board and GSs for the future YMCA movements. Those are:

* Do we really put our youth development as the first priority in our strategy?

* Do we keep provision in the budget for the youth development necessary for the staff placement (youth program directors) and training of the youth volunteers?

* Do we really try to include young people, active YMCA leaders into the YMCA decision making group? Do we prepare them as our successors of the decision making members in our YMCA?

In reality, the budgetary allocations for youth programs are inadequate, in most cases there is hardly any staff for the youth development programs because YMCAs have been struggling for its own survival and its sustainability. Now I would like to propose that regardless of our financial

constraints, could many of the YMCAs in Asia and Pacific focus on youth development by adding the finance, staff, space and programs into YMCA somehow in coming five years?

~ Kohei Yamada, General Secretary

APAY International Work Camp 2014

The APAY International Work Camp 2014 took place in Iloilo YMCA, Philippines during 12-18 May 2014. Forty-nine youths representing the YMCA movements of Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Mongolia and Philippines participated at this work camp.

The venue of the work camp was the Island of Tambaliza in Conception, Iloilo. The island was severely affected by the unprecedented typhoon Haiyan on November 8, 2013. The youths participated in various rehabilitation works in solidarity with the typhoon affected people of the island.

The participants were warmly welcomed by the villagers of Tambaliza upon arrival. The activities of the work camp were divided in three areas, (i) Construction of a mini school library and painting book shelves, (ii) Painting of class rooms, desks & chairs of an elementary school of Posadas and (iii) Preparation of a day care center playground and painting murals there.

About 500 children studied in the school comprising 3 buildings. These buildings were completely demolished by the typhoon. During the initial days the campers helped reconstructing the education centers. This was successfully accomplished and handed over to the students. Then having a break for two days, the participants engaged themselves in children's program, community feasts, home stays, cultural nights and exposures.

Tambaliza is a fishing village. The people here are living today without basic facilities. There is no electricity, no mobile network to connect between people. Tambaliza is an isolated village, the entire livelihood of the people here depends on fishing. The people are facing much difficulties in the last 5 months since the typhoon which have destroyed their livelihood. The good news is that the village people are now united, helping each other to rebuild their lives, inspite of having received very limited amount of government support.

Through this work camp the villagers of Tambaliza were introduced to the international group for their community work. It was fresh new experience for both parties. YMCA campers have seen in their own eyes the difficult life situation of the people of Tambaliza. The participants had wonderful experiences in building human relationships. This was a bridge for rebuilding lives not only buildings. Both the parties were open in sharing their cultural traits and were able to develop a bond with each other. Senior citizens of the village were concerned about YMCA group, they regularly visited the camp site and provide us with facilities what we required. The participants shared their love and care for the villagers, focusing on "we are a YMCA family". Delicious sea food were offered as well as the families made special food for YMCA group each day.

The villagers were generous to offer their small homes for participants to stay with them for a day, the participants were overwhelmed by their warm hospitality. At the end of the program each of the participants had a new story to tell, elaborating their learning and experiences at the work camp.

This work camp has helped the young people to learn about the skills to work together with the communities affected by natural disasters with love and care. This was a great experience for our YMCA participants. We gratefully acknowledge the support and cooperation of the people of

Tambaliza and the YMCA of Iloilo.
~ Roger Peiris, Youth Program Officer

APAY Youth Program and Training Fund

“We want to do something for our community but we have no money! We see the need of the people but we do not know where to start with.” No more panic—APAY Youth Program and Training Fund could be part of your answers. This fund is set up to engage youth people to initiate small to medium size programs and trainings together with Local and/or National YMCA. The program or training does not have to be ground-breaking idea. It must target at youth aged 12 - 30 and must involve at least 20 youth participants. We want youth to respond to community issue and concern.

We have heard from many young people that they wanted to join as part of APAY Green Challenge, YMCA World Challenge or other campaigns. However, it was not easy for them to start-up. Therefore, this fund can bridge this gap.

If you have an idea, don't hesitate to form a group, work out a plan with your YMCA then apply via National YMCA. The program could be from Local and/or National YMCA. National YMCA endorsement is required. The application opens all year round. For more details, please refer to the brief and application form downloadable at APAY website

http://www.asiapacificymca.org/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=388

~ Alvin Kan, APAY Youth Participation and Leadership Development Committee

Basic Secretaries' Training, Cambodia YMCA

Basic Secretaries Training is a first time ever held in Cambodia YMCA's history. It took place in Phnom Penh from May 20-26, 2014. It is an important and useful training which is considered as the platform to help promote understanding on YMCA's works. It plays important role in delivering the history, philosophy, concept and strategic working to YMCA staff, volunteers and members. It is also served as the stepping stone for staff, volunteers and members to carry on works and prepare concession for the future of YMCA. A whole week of training, although it is short, I have learnt a lot and known a lot of what my responsibility is, how YMCA works, and what I should do for development of Cambodia YMCA toward sustainability in the future. All of these used to be my difficulties in working to serve the goal of Cambodia YMCA in the previous time, but now I can assure that I know I can change.

Being staff, volunteer and youth member of Cambodia YMCA, I would like to express our sincere gratitude and special thanks to APAY and our General Secretary for your attention and assistance in conducting this training and in giving us the opportunity to attend. I am very pleased to accept this support. You provide us the support I seek. If it is possible, I would like to ask for your consideration to have this kind of training every year or once every two years.

~UK SAM OEUN, a Program Secretary of Cambodia YMCA & a participant of 1st Basic Secretary Training held in Phnom Penh recently. The above is his reflection on the training.

Not interested any more?