



Y's Men International
Y Service Clubs International

YMI WORLD

“To acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right”

Only for private distribution to members



IPE's LETTER: Building Today for a Better Tomorrow • FROM THE ISG: Waking the Fire under Ashes: Igniting the Spirit of Y's Men • NISHI'S FAREWELL LETTER: Yokohama to Yeosu: Over Eight Years as ISG • GUESTSPEAK: On the Value of Volunteering • FOR THE YOUTH: STEP & YEOP – A Relevant, Life-changing Experience! • BY THE YOUTH: India: Bubbling with Enthusiasm, Driven by Service • YMI PROGRAMMES: ASF - Supporting YMCA Training • RBM Partnership's Contribution to Global Progress • YOUTHSPEAK: YMCA Youth Parliamentarian Shares Her Experience • FROM THE AREAS: Estonia: Charity Concert • Norway: A Club with 123 Members • Sale of Christmas Trees in Support of Community Service • Thailand: Green Fund Helps to Reduce Carbon Emission • Hong Kong: Student Service Trip to Thailand • Canada: Pedalling for a Cause - In Support of Strong Kids Programme • Russia: Besides 'ladybirds' there are 'lady cabbages' • MANTRA FOR THE SOUL: God Screamed At Me



Editor's Page

Dear readers,



It is not always that one witnesses the transition of executive leadership in the Movement. Takao (Nishi) Nishimura has relinquished his position as International Secretary General in October 2018. However, he will be in Chiang Mai till after the MYM and handing over full charge to the new ISG Jose Varghese. In that context, both have expressed themselves – one in the form of a farewell letter and the other in the form of a forward looking message of hope, which we carry in this issue. We thank Nishi for his leadership over the last eight years and, as he plans his transition, wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

The central theme of this issue is 'volunteerism' to commemorate 5 December, the International Volunteer Day, so designated by the United Nations. We are happy that the President of YMCA International, Patricia Pelton, responded to our request to pen a very personal account of how she benefitted from being a young volunteer and the how she grew in the Y through volunteerism.

One of the essential elements of volunteerism is "giving" – the giving of one's time, energy, expertise or knowledge and money. It is in that context that we have highlighted a book by Arianna Huffington in this issue, *Thrive*. She writes in her introduction to this book, "Over time our society's notion of success has been reduced to money and power ... success, money and power have practically become synonymous." Therefore she argues that we need a "Third Metric," a measure of success that goes beyond power and money. And, what is this? It is, in fact, a metric or pillar comprising at least four reinforcements – *well-being, wisdom, wonder and giving*. Without this Third Metric, Huffington argues, our lives are "a two-legged stool" which one can

"balance on them for a while, but eventually you are going to topple over." Philosophers, poets and sages have, over centuries, extolled the virtue of giving. But none summarises it better than William Shakespeare when he writes, "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

This issue also carries three pieces focusing on the youth. International Service Director Rita Hettiarachchi, who guides our programmes STEP and YEEP gives a detailed account of these programmes and urges youth to make use of this great opportunity. The other two are what the youth have done – one by an individual in Australia and other by a group in India. Both are good stories and we hope that others will take inspiration from these. The future of the Movement lies in the hands of the youth leaders of today.

We would also like to thank all our correspondents who sent stories of action from the Area. Keep sending them to us and we'd be happy to include them here.

Before we sign off,

*Wish you all a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!*

Koshy Mathew

FROM MY BOOKSHELF

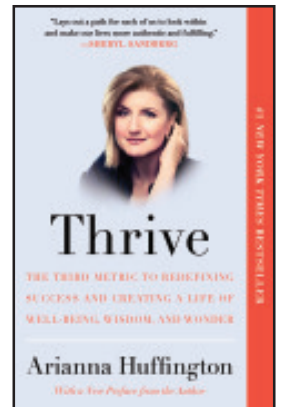
Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Happier Life by Arianna Huffington

In *Thrive*, Arianna Huffington, the co-founder and editor-in-chief of the Huffington Post and one of the most influential women in the world, has written a passionate call to arms, looking to redefine what it means to be successful in today's world.

She likens our drive for money and power to two legs of a three-legged stool. It may hold us up temporarily, but sooner or later we're going to topple over. We need a third leg – a Third Metric for defining success – in order to live a healthy, productive, and meaningful life.

In this deeply personal book, Arianna talks candidly about her own challenges with managing time and prioritising the demands of a career and two daughters. Drawing on the latest groundbreaking research and scientific findings in the fields of psychology, sports, sleep and physiology that show the profound and transformative effects of meditation, mindfulness, unplugging and giving, Arianna shows us the way to a revolution in our culture, our thinking, our workplaces, and our lives.

(Blurb on Amazon.com)



Cover picture: The ambulance vehicle of Y's Men's Club of RAHA Philippines, in action on the roads of Manila serving the community 24/7.

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Theme: *Building Today for a Better Tomorrow*



Building Today for a Better Tomorrow

Dear YMI club members,

It is with much pleasure that I send this greeting to you and your fellow club members. It is an interesting time for YMI as we regroup and adapt to current situations and challenges. Our organisation is facing a time of many changes and we are making an effort to meet those changes during a time of larger nation-wide and global transition. To be involved in YMI is exciting and I hope that we will continue to meet and bring inspired people together in forums such as this to ensure YMI remains at the cutting edge.

In "*Building Today for a Better Tomorrow*" I am confident that we can further promote the YMI mission where earnest service and warm fellowship is expressed and shaped by Christian ethics, encouraging us to work well together for the common good of all mankind. We will prepare well for tomorrow by doing our best today. I am inspired by many people who continue to work quietly and steadily behind the scenes to make things happen for everyone's benefit. I am also thankful for those YMI leaders and members from this Area who have gone before us, paving the way, forging new ground and leaving a valuable legacy for us to appreciate and build upon. You should be very proud of where you are today and expectant about where you are headed in the future.

Our motto "*To Acknowledge the Duty that Accompanies Every Right*", reminds us that there are two sides to every coin. YMI can offer members a wide range of experiences and benefits, but it is surprising to find out that great satisfaction can be achieved through service to others – by "servant leadership".

Shortly, YMI will look forward to 2022 when we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the formation of this Association. Let us take the time to reflect on the solid achievements of the past and consider in what ways this heritage can be enriched and enlarged through service and leadership in the future.

I encourage you all to think about how you can make a difference to YMI if you choose to! Be serious about your connections with YMI – make them strong, make them enjoyable and make them significant!!

Blessings and regards,

Jennifer Jones
International President Elect 2018/19

Service Club in partnership with the YMCA
NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations



WAKING THE FIRE UNDER ASHES: Igniting the Spirit of Y's Men

I launched into my new role as International Secretary General by connecting



with Y's Men leaders and YMCA associates across the world, as well as with the staff at IHQ. My first objective was to understand

how the Y's Men's Movement is currently perceived by diverse groups of members and potential members. I wanted to know their dreams and aspirations for our future.

This exercise has been an enriching experience for me during the last couple of months through which I have become familiar with some of the core challenges facing us. While I remain personally motivated by our rich history and legacy of service to the YMCA over the last 96 years, I have realised that, despite our good work and international collaboration, our organisation finds itself in the shadows, lacking scale, global visibility and unified action. Rather than be discouraged by this darkness, however, I am hopeful. The fire of the Y's Men spirit, currently dampened and smouldering under the ashes of our current situation, can again burn bright with just a little encouragement. The faith and aspiration of our club members will rebuild our Movement and spur us toward new heights.

The Spirit of Y's Men is our greatest power, and it has carried us through World Wars, natural disasters and other calamities which have challenged humanity during the last century. Even in the most difficult times, we have remained true to our mission to build a better world for all. Our common philosophy of Giving, Serving and Caring

is still capable of uniting over 25,000 people in unique fellowship. We give to communities in need, serve the YMCA in its pursuit of youth empowerment and universally care for our planet and its inhabitants.

The fire of the Y's Men spirit, currently dampened and smouldering under the ashes of our current situation, can again burn bright with just a little encouragement.

We need to transform this spirit into a strong global identity for our Movement to be rightfully recognised and valued. It is only through this recognition and appreciation that we will be able to grow and prosper. We have a history of extreme modesty where we should be unabashed in telling each other and the world what we do. Let's make it standard practice to share all our good works with each other and with the general public, using the wonders of modern communication at our disposal.

I reiterate my passion for our historical relationship with the YMCA

and feel strongly that, in order to effectively build and communicate our identity, we must rekindle our collaboration. I envisage a highly-engaged partnership that is mutually beneficial. While we are an independent entity with our own identity, recall that the first listed objective of our affiliated clubs is "to function primarily as service clubs for the YMCA." Yet, despite this, both Movements seem to have forgotten each other in some places. We need to address and rectify this.

Our vision is to have 50,000 YMI club members in 100 countries by 2022, striving together in fellowship for a better world by offering service to the YMCA and needy communities worldwide. Let's make this vision a reality by transforming it into a compelling and collective challenge, incorporating a calendar of steps and attainable goals that promote our YMCA relationship. In this way, we will reignite the spirit of our members, empowering them to fulfil our Towards 2022 statement, building not only our global presence but also our global identity, and thus ensuring a rich and engaged future for our organisation.

ISG Jose



The staff at IHQ welcomed new International Secretary General Jose Varghese (centre, left) who took office on 1 October 2018. Staff were joined by immediate past ISG Takao Nishimura (Nishi) (left) and outgoing Secretary General of the World Alliance Rev Johan Vilhelm Eltvik (centre, right) and his wife Ingunn (right). Pictured behind are IHQ staff members (L-R) Tracy Movigliatti, James Olle and Amine Ben Mastoura.



Yokohama to Yeosu: Over Eight Years as ISG

Dear Friends,

By the time you are reading this issue of *YMI World*, you may be celebrating Christmas or New Year and so, I wish all of you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2019!

Time really flew like an arrow for me and my wife, Kumiko. We moved to Geneva right after the 2010 International Convention in Yokohama, Japan (IC10) and I was stationed in our International Headquarters (IHQ) in Geneva for about six years until I moved to Chiang Mai where our Satellite Office (SLO) is located within Chiang Mai YMCA.

During my eight years as ISG, I have always been blessed working with dedicated leaders, particularly International Executive Officers, International Council Members, Area Presidents and International Service Directors as well as a very hard working staff team at IHQ. Some of the vital changes that were implemented with the support of those dedicated leaders are:

1. Reducing the number of International Council Members from 21 to 15 including two young ICMs with effect from 2015;
2. Downsizing IHQ operations and starting SLO in Chiang Mai in 2016.

3. Introducing the Special Area Support (SAS) fund using YMI's operational surplus of the previous year and it being distributed for stronger administration and governance by Area leadership.

All these changes were made in response to the downward trend of membership and income from Dues in order to sustain the Movement as well as the IHQ. We have been seeking ways to extend our Movement to have more clubs in local areas as well as beyond borders. Now we will have more opportunities to work with the YMCA closely to extend clubs with new leaders and my successor ISG Jose Varghese.

During these eight-and-a-half years, we made so many friends in different countries and this is the best treasure we have received through this mission. IC18 at Yeosu was our last International Convention as ISG and it became a very memorable one with over 3,000 participants, meaningful and commemorative projects and events, good workshops and entertainment programmes. We thank Host Committee Chairman Moon Sangbong and his great team. And, at this Convention I also got an opportunity to introduce my successor.

Hence, IC10 Yokohama was my start and IC18 Yeosu was my finishing point indeed. Another great moment was the opportunity to witness the presentation of the Ballantyne award to Past International President Hirotoishi Fujii who was my first IP when I took over as ISG in 2010-2011.



Many people have been asking me what my plans are after my retirement. Frankly I will take off some time to relax a bit and will seek and hear what God's plan is. As I am finally coming back to the highest level of this Movement as a "member" of a club which belongs to Y's Men International wherever I settle down, I will continue to serve as a Y's Man with the local YMCA. I thank you for all of your friendship and mentorship. God Bless.

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

(Ecclesiastes 7:8)

Nishi



At IC10 in Yokohama, Japan with wife, Kumiko.



At IC18 in Yeosu, Korea with IP Moon Sang-bong and incoming ISG Jose



GUESTSPEAK

On the Value of Volunteering –

A Personal Note from Patricia Pelton, President, World YMCA

To all my friends in the Y's Men's Movement,

It is with warm greetings that I write to you. I have been asked to share a few words with you about the value of volunteering within the YMCA – and I will do that – but I could not let this opportunity go by without beginning by acknowledging the energised spirit of partnership that exists between YMCA and Y's Men today.

At the YMCA World Council, I was delighted to meet your International President Elect, Jennifer Jones, and of course I know your new Secretary General Jose Varghese well and respect his work very much. The close spirit of friendship that exists between our two great organisations makes us capable of achieving many amazing things together. The sky is the limit! We can explore and advance Youth Empowerment more than we ever have and I look forward to joining you on that ongoing journey.

The Wonderful Role of Volunteers in the YMCA

I am pleased to share with you some of my own volunteering story and, through this, highlight some of the learnings and benefits that I have experienced through volunteering.

Before the YMCA I initially began volunteering with the YWCA in Canada. It was only after I moved to far north Canada (where there was no YWCA) that the YMCA became my volunteering focus. This began a very

happy relationship for me that has since been passed on to my children and now my children's children, all who are members of their local YMCAs!

Both the YWCA and YMCA were so welcoming to volunteers coming in to assist and expand their impact beyond that of just the paid staff.

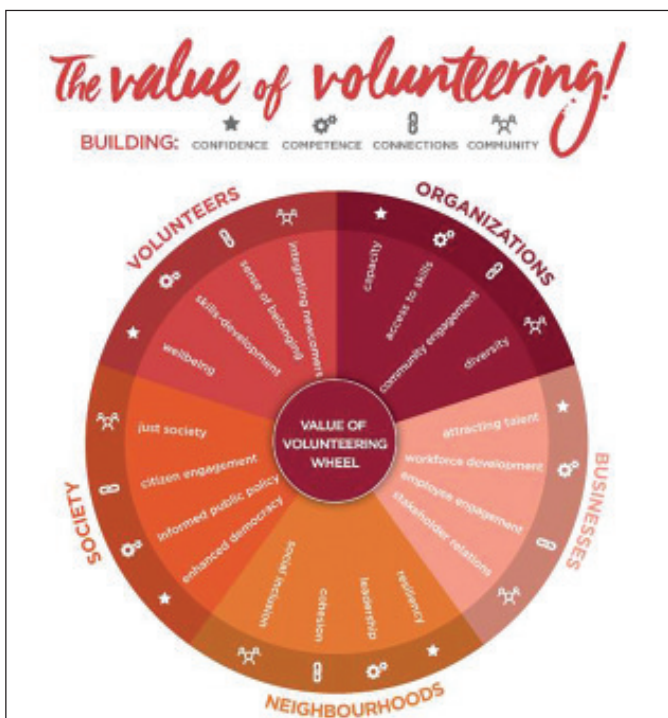


They understood that volunteers were the backbone of the Movement. To be welcomed with open arms into a YMCA and hear them say “yes, thank you for coming to volunteer. We really appreciate you” is empowerment of the best kind. I couldn't have been made to feel more welcome and, as a result, I was willing to serve as best as I was able.

To be welcomed with open arms into a YMCA and hear them say “yes, thank you for coming to volunteer. We really appreciate you” is empowerment of the best kind.

Secondly, it was through volunteering that I learnt about the history of the YMCA. Again, the Movement understood the importance of its history, of telling that story again and again and sharing its commitment to volunteering. To know that, right back at the start, George Williams and his twelve colleagues were all volunteers is a great motivation. These very young men achieved great things and this sets the tone for what volunteers can bring to the YMCA and what they can do. I have found this to be an important motivation for volunteers when they understand just how big their potential impact can be. The YMCA is attuned to receiving them and all they can offer.

When I became involved with my local YMCA I got to see first-hand the way in which this YMCA has brought together their community. I have witnessed this most





vidly when this community experienced a horrific bushfire and the YMCA was at the heart of serving their community and bringing it together at a time of deep need. I know this has been the case for YMCAs in so many communities.

These times of emergency and crises are when the community needs us so much, but I never forget those volunteers who work, day in day out, week after week, and, in many cases, year after year in quiet, humble service. These people are real champions and I try to thank them whenever I can for their service to helping others. What great examples they are to all of us. The local YMCAs are very good at acknowledging the contributions made by individuals and rewarding their service.

On to Greater Roles

I have also served in volunteer roles in my national YMCA Movement, chairing YMCA Canada and then onto the World YMCA Executive Committee. Within these environments there has been a chance to not only give but to receive. One experience stands out for me as a classic example of the benefit of volunteering, where you are giving, only to experience that you are getting so much more in return than you ever thought or expected.

As a result of my volunteering I have received much – meeting great people, learning about myself, and contributing to making a difference.

I was pleased to be a member of the World YMCA Safe Space Learning Group. This team comprised a mixture of volunteers and staff from across the world to tackle the difficult topic of how we become more inclusive and have opportunities to create safe spaces within the YMCA where any difficult discussions can be had. This was truly a case of the learning coming along the journey of discovery. Here, by contributing my time and effort to a small group, we were able to achieve a major breakthrough for the Movement, one that was ultimately received at the World Council. This group of volunteers were bringing their individual skills and experience to this group and, through our diversity, together we made something bigger and better as a result.

Today, as the new President of the World YMCA, I have a big focus on governance and seek to bring best practices through the Executive Committee. The role of volunteer as governance leader is another vital level of oversight to ensure we are doing the right things and doing them well. The partnership with staff is key to doing this right, as is

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

International Volunteer Day is celebrated on 5 December, nominated by the United Nations since 1985. This day provides volunteers and their organisations a chance to come in the limelight, for their contributions at local, national, or international levels.

understanding the balance of volunteer roles and staff roles. There are many things we are doing well in leading this democratic responsibility within the World YMCA but there are many areas we can improve in.

As a result of my volunteering I have received much – meeting great people, learning about myself, and contributing to making a difference. I have forged great partnerships with staff and also with other organisations. I take my role and responsibilities of volunteering very seriously. There is a job to be done and we have much work to do. We have governance to bring in the areas of fiduciary, strategic and generative oversight.

Whether you serve as President or you serve in your local YMCA, I would encourage everyone to actively volunteer their time and talents. The journey is rewarding and the experience is life changing.

“What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good.”

Spoken by Greek philosopher Aristotle over 2300 years ago, one of the most ancient quotes about volunteering offers proof that giving back to the community is hardly a new concept.

With so many people less fortunate than those of us who can afford to travel, and with funding for social services being brutally slashed, volunteering is becoming increasingly important these days.

From immigrants escaping violent conflict and under-privileged kids needing education to homeless people in need of housing, there are no shortage of ways volunteers can help make a difference. The greatest thing about volunteering may be the benefits it offers to individual recipients, their communities, and the volunteers themselves.

Quotehanger

“Wherever you turn, you can find someone who needs you. Even if it is a little thing, do something for which there is no pay but the privilege of doing it. Remember, you don't live in the world all of your own.” — *Albert Schweitzer*

“If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever.” — *Kofi Annan*

“Life's most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?” — *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” — *William Shakespeare*



FOR THE YOUTH

STEP & YEOP – A Relevant, Life-changing Experience!

PAP Rita Hettiarachchi, International Service Director for STEP and YEOP

STEP (Short Term Exchange Programme) is an exchange programme for children/grandchildren of club members of Y's Youth between the ages of 18 and 25 years. They are welcome to spend three to 11 weeks with a club member's family in another country or region of a country. It developed out of a desire for a programme that offered the opportunity for international experience to those who are unable or do not wish to participate in the longer exchange offered by the Youth Educational Exchange Programme (YEOP).

In contrast to YEOP, STEP does not involve attending school in another country. Rather, the focus is on participation in activities of interest to both the student and the host family, club and community. Examples include: club fundraising activities, involvement in YMCA camps or Time of Fast (TOF) projects.

Objectives and Possibilities

STEP shares many of the same objectives as YEOP such as to promote a better world, understanding among people of different cultures and to provide an international experience to future leaders of YMI. Some of the many benefits of STEP are:

- ◆ Experiencing different cultures, customs and languages.
- ◆ Experiencing the joys of global community and peaceful association among nations.
- ◆ Learning about the activities of YMI worldwide.
- ◆ Growing in self-confidence, responsibility and maturity.
- ◆ Bringing an international flavour to the host club and community.
- ◆ Learning about one's own country from a different location (if participating in an exchange within the country).

STEP is a programme with endless possibilities. It is important that clubs promote it so that students are made aware of this fantastic opportunity for international experience and growth. The programme benefits not just the student, but also the host family and community and our entire Movement because it helps fulfil one of the ultimate purposes of Y's Men/YMCA – world fellowship. By providing this opportunity to youth, we can ensure that future generations will be involved in and excited about our Movement.

STEP is *not* a holiday, though applicants do choose their holiday time to participate in the programme so that it does not interfere with their education. Since the time period is shorter than YEOP it is best if the language used is the same

as the student's to ensure good communication, although this may not always be possible. Also, the student may have learned other languages in school or at home and wish to be placed in an area where they can improve those language skills. This programme will succeed in its aims provided all participants open their minds to new and



innovative ideas. It is necessary that the club, host family and student cooperate to ensure that everyone benefits from the experience. The host family provides a caring home environment as well as club members who give the applicant as many opportunities as possible to learn about YMI in action.

The programmes benefit not just the student, but also the host family and community and our entire movement because it helps fulfil one of the ultimate purposes of Y's Men/YMCA – world fellowship.

Objectives Akin but of Longer Duration

YEOP is also a programme of Y's Men International, which arranges international exchanges for children/grandchildren of YMI club members or YMCA youth holding active membership for at least three years. Participants live with a family, receive education at a local school or similar institution and share the everyday life of the host family and community while participating in Y's activities/meetings, etc.

There is no fee involved for both STEP and YEOP applications and the process. However, the return air fare and pocket money should be borne by the parents of the applicant.

All Regions are encouraged to have their STEP or YEOP exchanges within the Regions as well which would cost less.

Interested? Please contact RSD in your Region and apply! We will try our best to find the loving Y's family with whom you will keep up the friendship for ever!



India: Bubbling with Enthusiasm, Driven by Service

A handful of young people who attended the Regional Youth camps earlier in Mid West India Region formed the **Y's Service Club of Immeuble Youth**, following a reunion organised by them in late 2017. It is now an active club with 25 members engaged in various activities.

The first activity was celebrating Christmas with the residents of two *adivasi* (tribal) settlements in Kozhikode, a northern district in Kerala. The stark realities in the settlements were an eye opener for all. They spent a whole day with them singing and dancing, sharing a Christmas cake and providing them with some of the groceries they required. The payoff was a heightened sense of satisfaction of having been able to spread joy and cheer during the festive season.



Club members with some of the residents in the tribal hamlet

The next initiative was meeting the tuition fees and marriage expenses of a brilliant postgraduate student who found it difficult to manage. This was followed by a visit to a lower primary school in an underprivileged area. This school with just 25 students learning the basics of the three R's was on the verge of closing down because the building was in a state of disrepair and needed immediate attention.



On the job!

Everyone rolled up their sleeves, metaphorically and physically, and took up the brushes and paint to give it a new look and make it pleasant for the children. The youth members were able to collect a sum of INR 30,000 (approx. USD 425) to buy the materials needed for the facelift and the study materials for the children.

Concern for the environment is also on the agenda of service. As part of Environment Day in June members

gathered at Kadamakkudy Island off Kochi coast. With the cooperation of the islanders they planted over 50 saplings and continue to care for it. The nature and cultural exploration trip to Gokarna in the neighbouring state of Karnataka, well known for its temples and sandy beaches, proved to be a booster. The trek through natural



This little boy gets a life's gist - the opportunity to read and write!

surroundings and visits to the pilgrim spots in the city was a different and exciting experience. They also found time to clean up the main Gokarna beach and converse with the local people to know more about local culture.

When the worst flood of the century inundated Kerala in August 2018, Y's Youth swung into action as volunteers rescuing people and animals from many parts of the state. Members of the Immeuble Club also responded to the crisis with one hundred per cent participation in the rescue and relief operations. All members are now registered volunteers of Kerala government in their Rebuild Kerala mission.

Unshakeable or immovable they may be as the name suggests, but are full of bubbly enthusiasm with a passion to help others.

Riya Wilson (Y's Youth member)



Quality time with some of the villagers



YMI PROGRAMME

ASF - Supporting YMCA Staff Training

The Alexander Scholarship Fund (ASF), named after Y's Men International's founder, Judge Paul William Alexander, was started in 1954 at Y's Men's International Convention in Lansing, Michigan. Y's Men had collected money for a famous painter to do a portrait of Judge Paul. He thought this a waste of money, but agreed to sit for a photograph by a famous photographer at less cost. The USD 905 surplus was to be placed in a trust to meet training costs of YMCA secretaries. The photo portrait was presented to the international gathering at Lansing and a trust agreement was approved, creating the Fund.

Now each Area of YMI raises funds for the training of YMCA personnel or prospective YMCA candidates in the Area. Goals are usually set through discussion at club, District, Region and Area levels and subsequently approved by the International Council. The Y's Men and their leaders, especially the Service Director for ASF at each level, then plan how to achieve the goals. In many regions and areas this is done through collective effort with the Area Service Director for ASF working closely with Y's Men at the Regional and Area levels, as well as the local YMCA, for maximum results. In line with ASF policy, 90% of the funds are used for training of YMCA personnel at the local level, while 10% goes

to the International Headquarters (IHQ) in Geneva for allocation.

Utilisation of the funds varies. In some areas the funds are used for training in professional full-time, part-time or correspondence courses ranging from 1-4 years and leading to a recognised qualification. In others they are used for shorter non-qualification courses to increase knowledge relevant to the work of the YMCA. Other YMCAs use the funds for seminars, conferences, conventions and leadership programmes considered useful for the professional development of the recipients.

The International Selection Panel allocates the 10 per cent of funds remitted to the IHQ, working closely with the Y's Men leadership. The allocation is made to national or area YMCA movements who are required to submit applications for ASF funding.

The ASF has helped to cement cooperation and partnership between Y's Men and the YMCA. It has assisted the YMCA in training staff for a better understanding of the YMCA and its role in society, for career development and for more effective performance of their work. In many areas the YMCA staff have, in turn, helped Y's Men in various ways, including recruitment of new Y's Men, formation of new Y's Men's Clubs, provision of offices for meetings


and Y's Men activities, conservation of membership and joint service to their communities.

The current revision of the ASF Guidelines aims at enabling the YMCA and Y's Men everywhere to work together in promotion, fund-raising and allocation of funds to support the YMCA in line with the purpose of the ASF. A data bank of ASF fund recipients and a standard form for reporting on the utilisation and usefulness of funds are essential tools in our quest to make the ASF Programme better understood by all Y's Men and YMCAs, as partners in service.

November 2018 has been identified as the Emphasis month for ASF collection. The International President's target for 2018-19 is CHF 11,250. Average yearly contributions since 2013 have been CHF 10,156 and the highest yearly contribution since 2013 was CHF 13,015.

The question now is, can we beat all those figures and raise CHF 15,000 this year for an International ASF total of CHF 150,000? Yes, we can!


Editor's note: The major part of this article was written by PIP Benson Wabule when he was International Service Director for ASF and first appeared in *YMCA World* June 2003, later reprinted in *Y's Men's World* (No. 01_2003/2004).



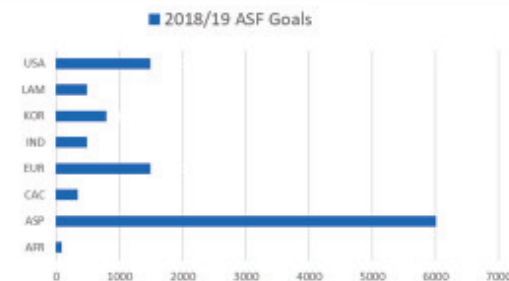
IP Moon Sang-bong, ISD ASF Dagoberto Garrido and ISG Jose Varghese request every member to participate in the ASF fundraising campaign.

[Donate Now!](#)

**How are you raising funds for ASF?
Share your stories, motivate others!**



Alexander Scholarship Fund



Region	Goal
AFR	100
ASP	6000
CAC	390
EUR	1500
IND	500
KOR	800
LAM	500
USA	1500

Emphasis Points

- *The Alexander Scholarship Fund strengthens our relationship with YMCA, supporting leadership development and fostering goodwill*
- *The Alexander Scholarship Fund provides educational opportunities for the most deserving YMCA staff, giving them the chance to pursue their dreams and advance along their career paths*
- *The Alexander Scholarship complements the Youth Empowerment movement, serving primarily young persons and promoting the Change Agents and One Million Voices initiatives of the World YMCA*
- *The Alexander Scholarship Fund is a locally administered programme to make your own, with 90% of funds raised remaining in the Region or Area to be used for local YMCA staff training. This averages about CHF 90,000 - 100,000 per year.*
- *Last year the 10% sent to IHQ was used for the Change Agent Leadership Development Programme of the World YMCA, supporting the participation of 10 meritorious, young YMCA staff*

LET'S MAKE IT OUR BEST YEAR EVER!

IP 2018/19 target: CHF 11,250 for the international share. Let's beat that!

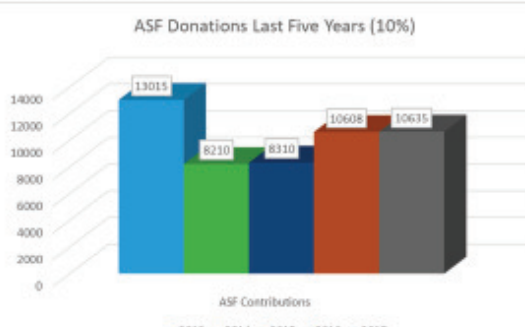
Average total, annual ASF contribution during the past five years: CHF 10,156. Let's beat that!

Highest contribution in the last five years: CHF 13,015. Let's beat that!

Can we raise CHF 15,000 this year for International ASF - CHF 150,000 total? Yes, we can!

Let's make that our goal!

[Our ASF website page](#)



ASF Contributions (10%): 2013: 13015, 2014: 6210, 2015: 8310, 2016: 10608, 2017: 10635



RBM Partnership's Contribution to Global Progress

The Roll Back Malaria (RBM) partnership was established in 1998 as part of a global drive to galvanise stronger action to curb malaria, because of which, the global burden of malaria has decreased significantly over the past 20 years. Through the expansion of anti-malaria efforts, over six million deaths were averted, primarily among children under five in sub-Saharan Africa. The malaria-focused target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which called for halting and beginning to reduce the incidence of malaria by 2015, has been achieved. RBM has made an important contribution to this achievement, helping forge consensus between partners, mobilising resources, and catalysing action.

However, malaria continues to pose a major public health challenge. As of 2015, there were more than 200 million malaria cases and more than 400,000 malaria deaths worldwide. More than three billion people are still at risk of infection in 97 countries and territories. The disease remains heavily concentrated in low-income countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

As the MDG era gives way to the new global development framework set out in the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), new approaches are being introduced.

In May 2015, governments endorsed WHO's Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030, a new technical road map for countries that are working to reverse and eliminate the spread of malaria. The strategy was released alongside RBM's parallel advocacy plan, Action and investment to defeat malaria 2016-2030. Together, these documents set ambitious targets for malaria control, including a 90 per cent reduction in global malaria incidence and mortality.

To reach these targets, global funding will need to triple from current levels. New structures are needed to engage key stakeholders, mobilise global action and generate the required financial commitments.

Meanwhile, WHO remains committed to fulfilling its leading role in the fight against malaria, setting global policy and targets, establishing norms and standards, monitoring the global burden and response, and expanding and strengthening technical support to Member States.

RBM partners include WHO and other UN entities, notably UNDP, UNICEF and the World

Bank, as well as foundations, private sector entities, non-governmental organisations, research and academic institutions, and development partners.

Y's Men International is playing a key role in this battle. As a partner within the RBM Partnership and a member of the Alliance for Malaria Prevention, we raise money to support our primary partner, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The IFRC's fight against malaria is focused on social mobilisation (encouraging and assisting communities to work together to fight the disease), communication aimed at changing behaviour, and assistance to households with LLIN distribution and hanging through the flagship programmes of "Hang Up" and "Keep Up". It also supports individual countries' ministries of health in achieving global targets.

See the infographic below for the goals set by the International Officers. In 2013 we collected a record of CHF 129,343. The question asked is, can we raise CHF 150,000 this year? And the answer is, Yes, we can! A donation of just CHF 7.00 by each member will help us reach this goal!



RBM Partnership To End Malaria

The RBM Partnership To End Malaria (formerly the Roll Back Malaria Partnership) is the largest global platform for coordinated action for the eradication of malaria.

Since 2009, we have raised more than CHF 631,000, surpassing our CHF 500,000 target in 2016/17.

IP Moon Sang-bong, RBM ISD & Committee Chair Tung-Ming Hsiao and ISG Jose Varghese request every member to participate in the RBM fundraising campaign.

Donate Now!



2018/19 RBM Goals



More than CHF 631,000 raised since 2009

Region	2018/19 RBM Goals
USA	4500
LAM	1000
KOR	1000
IND	9013
EUR	47800
CAC	2353
ASP	34328
AFR	130

Emphasis Points

- The wonderful work that has been accomplished by the RBM Partnership to End Malaria and its ongoing commitment to address malaria-related issues by sharing news, activities and publications available on the website: <https://endmalaria.org>
- The unification within our movement, being impassioned and working on a common objective
- Our improved visibility and credibility as an international service organisation through our participation in this project
- Our RBM contribution goals for this year and plans to achieve them. What has your club been doing to promote and collect funds for RBM? Share your stories, motivate others.

Take a look at the initiative or Area Europe: <https://www.ymenservice.eu/programs/roll-back-malaria/>

- Special ways to commemorate the end of this international programme this year, concluding a 10-year historic partnership with the Red Cross

RBM Donations 2009 - 2017



LET'S MAKE IT OUR BEST YEAR EVER!

Let's beat the IPE goal of CHF 102,344.

Let's beat our 2013 record of CHF 129,343.

Can we raise CHF 150,000 this year?
Yes, we can!

Each member needs to donate just CHF 7.00, that's less than CHF 0.60 a month!

[Our RBM website page](#)



A Youth Parliamentarian Shares Her Experience

Encouraged by the Y Service Club of Adelaide and guided by Russell Jones, young **Zainab Jimie** participated in the 2018 YMCA Youth Parliament in South Australia. The sitting sessions took place in the Lower House of the State Parliament. The following is her reflections, prodded by Russell Jones for the benefit of YMI, on this unique experience.

A little about myself:

My name is Zainab Jimie. I consider myself a passionate young woman. I am currently 18 years old, doing a double degree in Law and Sociology at the University of Adelaide. In hopefully less than 10 years, I see myself with the privilege of working at the UN Women organisation. Since I was 11, I have dreamt of advocating Human Rights and protecting the marginalised and voiceless. I have always wanted to help people. Moreover, I aim to spark a change for my community and my future. I am from an Eritrean-Australian background and a proud young Muslim woman. Although I occasionally face difficulties and backlash with my identity, I remain hopeful and optimistic by continuing to defy the connotations and stereotypes. My hobbies include socialising with my family and friends, reading books, going for a walk and surfing the internet in my free time.

How I became involved with Youth Parliament:

This year, I noticed many announcements on social media for the Youth Parliament Programme (YP) and it sparked my interest. Although in the beginning, I was preoccupied with coursework, but my friends also noticed the YP announcements and forwarded them to me, encouraging me to give it a try. I decided to research about the programme and I was very pleased with everything I discovered. I also realised that one of my friends had attended the programme twice. I talked with her and assured myself that my participation would not interfere with my university schedule. So, I decided to go for it and applied to participate in Youth Parliament 2018.

The training I received?

During the first meeting we had for Youth Parliament with my team, I asked the participants how the programme benefited them and why they enjoyed it so much. Prior to the training weekend, I was eager to learn as much as I could in preparation for the programme.

Then came our training weekend, which was on a weekend from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. During these days, the Youth Parliament task force and managers of the programme had provided us with all the information we needed and gave us training booklets. The training booklet consisted of a detailed history of the South Australian Parliament and the Members of Parliament in 2018 and their districts. It also contained examples of Bills, steps in how to write a Bill and other useful tips about the residential week in Parliament.



With the permission of the Chair: Zianab Jimie poses for the cameras sitting on the Speaker's chair. On her right is her mentor Russell Jones

There had been participants ranging from 15 to 25 years of age, those who are still in high school and those in university, as well as participants from local and regional areas.

How were the participants formed into teams?

Task Force and Training Managers explained that the 85 participants were formed into 11 teams to create diverse debates. There had been participants ranging from 15 to 25 years of age, those who are still in high school and those in university, as well as participants from local and regional areas. Participants were also distributed into teams based on their ethnicity, to culturally diversify the teams as well.

I was in Team 7, and our team was 'Discount ABBA' as majority of the participants loved that band. We had eight members in our team, three of whom were from outside of Adelaide. Some were high school students and the other four members were university students. Our team mentor was also the Youth Governor for 2018.

What Bill did I work on?

We had chosen 3 topics that we were passionate about in order to create a Bill. They related to the issues of environmental sustainability, transparent wages and multiculturalism and diversity. The Task Force had chosen to focus our Bill on transparent wages as this was a unique topic and thus, was not similar to other team Bills.

Our Bill aimed to make wages transparent, to decrease pay discrepancies, especially by reducing the gender wage gap and to increase public trust in companies. This would be done by making sure that the annual salary of employees in every company would be public knowledge. It also would have enabled employees to discuss and disclose their wages with anyone, including other employees, without the fear of being sanctioned.

Youth Parliament provided a safe and empowering environment for us all to be confident and voice our opinions. I loved learning about the different problems in South Australia and how we, as young leaders, would create laws to resolve them.

My contribution to the debates, and the outcome of the Bills

Throughout the week we spent in Parliament, there were many debates. On the first day of debating, I stayed quiet during the majority of the debates, watching the other participants in awe. I was so very impressed and I took time to learn from them, as they evidently had more experience in Youth Parliament than me, as I was a first-timer. During the last few debates, as a member of the Government, I had argued for the Greenhouse Emissions Bill and stood up to question the Abortion Accessibility Bill during Committee of the Whole for experience before my speech the next day.

My biggest contribution to the debates was offering to be the Main Refuter in the House of Assembly for my team. My job was to oppose the Electoral Amendment Bill moved by the Opposition and that is exactly what I did. I made a 4-minute speech refuting their Bill. Once I finished my speech, I felt very proud of myself and I received many compliments and praise. This boosted my confidence even more as I was encouraged to partake in many other debates, which I enjoyed doing.

I also sponsored our own Bill, the Transparent Wages Bill, on the Thursday morning and my team members in the House of Assembly decided to perform a shenanigan as



The Parliament House of South Australia where the session was held

well. We sang our own lyrics from a song made by Discount ABBA. It was hilarious.

What was the highlight for me?

My favourite part about Youth Parliament was the debate on each of the Bills. I loved debating the Bills myself as well as watching other young and passionate Parliamentarians doing so. It was a new and exhilarating experience as I had never truly debated before. Youth Parliament provided a safe and empowering environment for us all to be confident and voice our opinions. I loved learning about the different problems in South Australia and how we, as young leaders, would create laws to resolve them. I loved being on the Government side of Parliament as well, rather than being in the Opposition.

Has the participation in YP been of future benefit to me?

Participating in Youth Parliament this year was not only an unforgettable experience but also a very beneficial one. I had learned many new skills, like writing passionate speeches and executing them powerfully as well as gaining firsthand experience in how the parliamentary system and procedures operate. As Youth Parliament is a renowned and respectable programme, I am able to put my participation on my resume as evidence of being a Parliamentarian for a week. I can also say that Youth Parliament has given me more direction into what I can do with my law degree. As a turning point, I am seriously considering running for Parliament in the future to create the change in my community as I have always wanted.

I am absolutely grateful to Russell Jones and his club, as well as my other sponsors, for helping me and giving me the opportunity to make the most out of this programme and I thank them for their generosity.



FROM THE AREAS

Estonia: Charity Concert Celebrates Centenary of Four Nations

A charity concert to commemorate the centenary year, which falls within a span of 12 months in 1917-18, of the founding of the modern nations of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, all part of Y's Men International, was held in Pärnu, Estonia recently. (Finland gained its independence on 6 November 1917, Estonia on 24 February 1918, Lithuania on 16 February 1918 and Latvia on 18 November 1918).

Karro-Selg, Regional Director Elect of Finland-Balticum Region said that, as organisers, their challenge was to find performers from among the citizens of these four countries and thus the programme was influenced by what they had to choose from. The concert began with Raeküla Old School Centre's own young musicians performing. Mari-Liis Holm sang while accompanying herself on the guitar.

Next was the 12-year-old pianist Ruslan Andrejev who has been playing the piano since he was five. Playing in the concert hall of Raeküla Old School Centre was this young man's first performance in Estonia. He lives in Staitsele, northern Latvia, relatively close to the Estonian border. He had become well-known in Latvia due to successful performances in classical music competitions and, thanks to this concert, now in Estonia too.



Musicians from the four nations perform at the Charity Concert

Katrin Hildunen-Alvela and Pikku Orvokki represented Pärnu Ingrian Finns Association with their youngsters' concert programme. They performed on the zither, sang folk songs and danced folk dances. Lithuanian national Zita Gudelevičiūtė has been living in Pärnu for about ten years and can speak Estonian, even though this time she was especially asked to cite Lithuanian poetry in the original language. She regaled the audience with her fluency and recital. A Y's member living in Helsinki sang in

Swedish, it being their mother tongue.

Admission to the concert was free, but all guests bought charity lottery tickets voluntarily, so some lucky contributors had the chance to win prizes. The prizes had been donated by well-wishers to be used in charity lotteries. The money collected from this lottery is being used to develop opportunities of recreational activities in the Raeküla Old School Centre.

Urmas Saard

(Translated into English by Ester Haas)
Source: Area Europe's website

USA: It's All About Service

Although a small and ageing club, the Great Falls Y's Men Club in Great Falls, Montana happens to be a club that provides service in spite of losing their YMCA many years ago. Harold Spilde (seen in the pic on the right) and a handful of men work hard to give back to the community as best they can.

The Club Banner is a symbol of their hard work. It shows the many things they have done through the years and they proudly display these accomplishments by carrying their precious banner to Regional meetings. For example, unable to support their local YMCA, they help with the YMCA Camp located in another City, Helena. They have provided funding for the local Boys & Girls Club, Youth Hockey, and Soccer. A local programme called "Fish Emergency Food Programme" to provide food to families in crisis is also in their list. Many club members work at the St. Ann's Soup Kitchen serving food to the poor and homeless; they do the clean up and prepare vegetables to give out.

We thank the Great Falls Y's Men Club for their devotion to their own community.

Debbie Redmond, PAP Area USA





FROM THE AREAS

Norway: A Club with 123 Members Called the “Miracle”

Mandal is the southernmost town in Norway with a population of 15,000. The local Lutheran church has good standing and there are many active Christian clubs and organisations.

Among these, you will find Mandal Y’s Men’s Club, chartered in March 2014. As of November 2018, the club has 123 members. Due to this unexpected and unusual development, the club has been called a “miracle”.

The club meetings are held at an old converted barn and, on average, 70 members attend regularly. The meetings follow the traditional Y’s Men agenda consisting of interesting talks, covering a large variety of topics, supper, singing and devotion. When new members are welcomed it is done in a less formal way than the traditional “Y’s Men way”. The club tries to find informal ways of handling Y’s Men routines. The main aim is to see that everybody coming to club events should feel comfortable and wants to come back. The club is open to everybody, but has a clear Christian profile.

How was the club established? A retired Y’s couple, returning to Mandal after living in Stavanger for 35 years, discussed the idea of forming a Y’s Men’s club with some



Some of the members at an outing

of their friends, all of them members of the Mandal YMCA youth club, some 50 years ago. They invited 15 friends to a gathering in their private home. They wanted to test the idea to re-establish the YMCA society that they all used to belong to. The idea was met with great enthusiasm, and it was easy to get people to sign up.

All members were (and still are) recruited through direct personal invitations!

Bjørn Arve Bentsen, Regional Director, Norway

Sale of Christmas Trees in Support of Community Service

'Tis the season for Christmas trees from Bendigo to Hawaii to California to Minnesota and beyond. Wonderful fundraisers. Many clubs in North America, Europe, and Australia raise funds for community service by selling Christmas trees. Given below are a few examples from Area USA and Region Australia.

USA: North Coast Y Service Club

In support of the Armed Services the North Coast Club organised the Encinitas Street Fair in November. Lots of handcrafted items perfect for holiday giftgiving, cork ornaments and wreaths, pine cone fire starters, cocktail glasses and jewellery were on sale. In short there was something for everyone on one’s list!

Source: FB page



Y's Men's Club sale helps fund the following groups in our community:

ACES	Illaco Fire Safety Alliance
Aging Care Connections	Isarishah Community Partners
Angelina Syndrome	Isarishah Career Network
Arja Paragahan Research Foundation	Leadership
Agere Caring Place For Kids	Legacy Guild
Beds PLUS	People Care
Cancer Care Foundation	Prairie Trail Federation
Caring Place for Kids	Quilts & Precious
Community Nurse	Senior Care (Community Nurse)
Community Support Services	Special Olympics
Greater LaGrange YMCA	St. Vincent De Paul Society
Helping Hand	Student Service Awards
Hope Clinic	

Buy A Tree Share In The Joy Of Christmas Giving!

USA: Naz Baseball (Nazareth Academy Baseball) in the state of Illinois, USA continued the 2019 season theme of Pay It Forward by helping the Y’s Men’s Club unload 1,700 Christmas trees. The Y’s Men’s Club donates over \$45,000 to local charities in need.

source: https://twitter.com/baseball_naz



USA: The 69th Christmas Tree Sale of the The Hilo Y’s Men’s & Women’s Club started with the VIP Pre-order Sales in late November this year.

Bendigo, Australia

FRESH CHRISTMAS TREES on sale

A PROJECT OF THE Y SERVICE CLUB OF BENDIGO

DECEMBER 1 - 2
DECEMBER 7 - 9; 13 - 17

100A-100B MCDON-PTW | 547-524 588-474

Flower: Km 2439 340 510

AT THE YMCA - TOM TWEED STADIUM, HUNDY STREET, BENDIGO



FROM THE AREAS

Taiwan: Multiple Community Service Projects

Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament for Youth

In order to encourage youths to develop the good habit of regular exercises and help them stay away from drugs, Tainan YMCA and Y's Men's Club of Tainan joined hands to conduct an "Anti-drug Youth 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament" in November every year. The tournament is very popular and the number of participants have been increasing every year. This year, over 500 high school students participated. Mr. Jen-Jay Chen, General Secretary of Tainan



On the basketball court and off drugs

YMCA and Mr. Jer-Hong Tsai, RD of Taiwan Region greeted the youths during the opening ceremony. Many Y's Men and Y's Menettes were present during the tournament to cheer the players. There was much fun and frolic all day long.

The Drug Hazard Prevention and Control Centre of the Health Bureau set up an anti-drug campaign booth in a corner to allow youths to have a deeper understanding of the dangers caused by drugs and to exhort them to stay away from drugs.

Pei-Hsien Tu, President Y's Men's Club of Tainan

Honouring the Elderly

Early October in Taiwan, people celebrate "Senior Citizens' Festival," to show their care, respect and appreciation to the



Feast for five hundred on around fifty tables



The Club President takes the lead in serving the guests

elderly. The South District of Taiwan held a huge banquet for indigenous elders and their families in the mountain area of Kaohsiung on 6 October.

The Y's Men's Club of Kaohsiung-The Port took the lead in organising this. The Y's Men's Clubs of Kaohsiung, Pingtung, Tainan, and Pingtung-South Mountain together with Southern Taiwan Youth Club and Kaohsiung YMCA, were co-sponsors.

It was not an easy task with over 500 hundred people being invited to the banquet to be seated at around 50 tables. Thirty volunteer chefs cooked 10 delicious dishes for each table. All equipments including cookware, tableware, tables, chairs and food materials had to be delivered from the city to the mountain area. It cost around USD 10,000 which was donated by Y's Men and some vendors. Seventy Y's families participated. All in all, it was a new experience for us.

Blood Donation

Pingtung Club, Taichung Great Vision Club, and Center District organised a blood donation activity as part of their Community Service programmes. Not only did the Y's families



Organisers waiting for donors at the blood donation drive

donate, they also encouraged local people by rewarding the donors with gifts such as T-shirts, rice and tea. At the end of the day each club/District got 1300-1500 units (1 unit equals 250 cc) of blood.

Chu-Ai Anna Chen, Kaohsiung-the Port Club



FROM THE AREAS

Thailand: Green Fund Helps to Reduce Carbon Emission

Global warming and climate change are serious issues that need action from all sections of society. Sao Hin YMCA in Chiang Mai, Thailand has a regular and ongoing education programme on environment and climate change. With good cooperation and support from Y's Men International, especially from



Demo on saving power at a workshop

Colin Lambie, chair of the YMI Green Team, for technical inputs on calculating the carbon footprint, Sao Hin YMCA is on the path to become 'Green YMCA'.

In 2018, the YMI Green Fund supported the 'Light Upgrade Project' of Sao Hin YMCA. Training sessions were organised for teachers, students and villagers to understand how climate is changing and to gain more knowledge about electricity saving and to reduce carbon emission.

At Na Kwao Kiew village of Lampang Province, 90 LED lamps were provided to 45 families to replace T8 fluorescent lamps. Villagers also ensure



Happy villagers with their LED lamps

that lights are turned off and unplug the electrical devices when not in use to save electricity. They are very proud of having made a small contribution to slowdown global warming and decrease carbon emission.

Patcharin Aviphan,
Chiangmai YMCA

GREEN FUND SUPPORT FROM Y's MEN INTERNATIONAL

Note from YMI Green Team Chair, Colin Lambie:

Upgrading lights in local community is an example of what any Y's Men's Club or YMCA could do. Applications for grants to help with similar projects are welcome and are due by mid-March 2019. For details, refer to www.ysmen.org/environment.

Inspire Us to Have a Green Heart and Green Life!

Hong Kong: Student Service Trip to Thailand



Left: The fundraising campaign in May, and out in the village in northern Thailand with the children

On an afternoon in May this year, a group of students from The Campus YMCA of PolyU, Hong Kong, held a fundraising activity in the Salisbury YMCA of Hong Kong to support their service trip to northern Thailand in early June.

They are a student-based organisation, engaged in a handful of voluntary programmes throughout the year, including caring for stray animals and ethnic minorities, etc.

On the Thailand trip, they spent five days in a homestay

village, organising teaching programmes and construction work. The money raised was used to purchase sports equipment, stationery and other daily necessities for the village children.

The Y's Men's Club of Tsim Sha Tsui donated HKD 1,000 (approx. CHF 126) to each of the 25 participants that undertook the services trip to northern Thailand organised by the Campus-Y of PolyU.

Andy Fu, ASD-PR, Area Asia Pacific



FROM THE AREAS

Canada: Pedalling for a Cause - In Support of Strong Kids Programme

The YMCA's first annual "Spin-a-Thon," held in October was a resounding success, raising over CAD 10,000 for the **Strong Kids** campaign. Twenty corporate sponsors, 150 spinners and 25 volunteers, from New Brunswick's capital city region, teamed up to make the "Spin-a-Thon" one of the Y's biggest fundraising events of 2018. Fredericton's Epsilon Y's Service Club, a supporter of Strong Kids, was one of the partners.

YMCA Strong Kids is an annual fundraising campaign focused on raising much-needed resources to give children, adults and seniors the opportunities they need to live healthier, happier lives! Strong Kids is about accessibility to the Y, for people in need, through membership and 'Camp Scholarship Assistance'. This means giving a family a place to get active with a health and fitness membership, helping a child learn to swim, or providing children with the chance to experience the magic of a YMCA day camp!

"The Epsilon Y's Service Club has a long history of working with and supporting the Fredericton YMCA in developing and delivering programmes and activities for families in our region," said Margaret Loughrey, chair of the club's YMCA liaison committee. "We also support other great community organisations but our number one priority and commitment continues to be working closely with the folks at our local YMCA."

The Epsilon Y's Service Club has more than 60 members who provide funding to the Strong Kids Programme. Club



Spinning with a smile to help kids

members also donate, prepare and serve food for donors who attend the Y's annual Strong Kids Luncheon.

The Epsilon Y's Service Club's primary fundraisers include operation of the canteen and bar at the Grant Harvey Arena in Fredericton, New Brunswick and the Fredericton Home Show, first run in 1982. Funds from these and other activities, enable the Epsilon Y Service Club to support the programmes and activities of the YMCA, contribute to many other community organisations and projects as well as award annual scholarships to graduates from three local High Schools. The Epsilon Y's Service Club has raised and distributed over a million dollars to various community projects since its inception in 1947!

Bill Irwin (Asst. Editor, YMI World for Area Canada Caribbean)

Russia: Besides 'ladybirds' there are 'lady cabbages'

'Lady cabbages' appeared in Kirovsk of the Barents Region in Russia in October to make a special party in the city club for old people. There they cooked meals from cabbage - a traditional Russian vegetable - pancakes, chops, pies

and soup, sang 'cabbage' songs and amused themselves and everybody!

The event was organised by the Y's Men's Club of Khibini-Tietta. They became a part of the city club for pensioners which is called "The Spring". "The Spring" was founded two years ago and its goal is to develop creative activities of old people. The Khibini-Tietta club is a young club and has a train of activities such as holding charity fairs, collecting clothes for distribution among old people in hospitals, making dress-crossings, exchanging used books and collecting old batteries for recycling.

PRD Marina Makrova, Russia



The 'lady cabbages' of Russia



MANTRA FOR THE SOUL

Max Ediger*

God Screamed At Me

“I screamed at God for all the starving children, and then I realized that all of the starving children were God screaming at me.”

Anonymous

It has been heart wrenching to watch the news and see how the world is treating its children. In Palestine, Yemen, and many other countries, children suffer and die as the result of wars waged by adults, and by policies that deprive many of their basic requirements for life.

In the USA, immigrant children have been taken away from their parents at the border and placed in cages. The tears and screams of these children have left me sleepless and shaken. How can we, as a “Christian” nation, treat people, especially children, in this way? And yet, many Christians and government officials in America support this action, blaming it on the parents who decided to come into the country without visa. They say it is done as a deterrent that will keep illegals out of the country. It seems safe to put the blame on the parents. Then we do not have to be responsible for our own actions and the pain they create. But that’s just too easy. We always have options for responding to events, and in the end, we are completely responsible for the option we choose to employ whether it be war or separation of children from their parents. Let’s not try to pass the blame on to others. The suffering of these children is caused by us because we have opted to respond to the situation by waging war or by taking children away from their parents and placing them in “prisons.” True, attempts have now been made to reunite the children with their parents, but some may face separation forever. The very fact that our government decided on this course of action to begin with is already a judgment against us.

We need to be aware that everyone who enters our country illegally or to seek asylum has a story to tell, and if we knew those stories we might respond in a much more compassionate way. For most of my life I have worked with refugees, illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. I have listened to their stories. I have shed tears with them. I have felt the hopelessness and anger many of them experience. And I have asked God, “Why? Why do you allow such suffering? Why don’t you hear the voices of the ‘Least of These?’” And God always seems to answer, “Their cries are My cries. Their stories are My stories.

*Max Ediger directs the School of Peace from Cambodia. Reprinted with permission of PeaceSigns, the online publication of the Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Church USA, www.mennolink.org/peace

Why don’t My people hear them and respond with compassion?”

In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and don’t prevent them.” He did not say, “Make the little children suffer if you do not like what their parents are doing.”

As Christians we have the responsibility to reflect Jesus to the world. Be assured, we are being watched and what others see is not always a reflection of Christianity as a compassionate and loving faith. Placing “In God We Trust” on our money does not make us a Christian nation. Our actions, especially our responses to suffering, are what tells the world what we truly are.

But amidst all of the confusion and heartlessness, there are also responses of deep love and compassion by people of faith. We do not hear enough of these stories, so unfortunately the world does not always know. Individuals, churches and communities hear the screams of the children as the screams of God, and they are acting. We must tell these stories and we must, and can, do more.



invites

Club leaders to send stories of activities undertaken with one or more high-resolution pictures and appropriate captions. Write-ups must not exceed 150 words.

Readers are also requested to send their views and notes on matters of concern for the Movement, globally.

Submit your stories and pictures at:
www.ysmen.org/yimiworld

Last date for submission for next issue:
28 February 2019

Y'S MEN INTERNATIONAL IS AN ACTIVE GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN DEDICATED TO
SERVING THE COMMUNITY



AND WE HAVE FUN DOING IT!

Our Service Clubs can promise you and your family the personal pleasure of fellowship and shared values and ideals plus the satisfaction of making your community a better place to live in.

The Y's Men's Club in your area is part of a worldwide organisation that works with YMCAs for community betterment in over 70 countries and territories on all continents, offering international opportunities for contacts and projects.

We're a mixed group that thrives on the variety of qualities that each of us contributes to the whole.

This is your opportunity for involvement and growth

INDIVIDUALLY

- To further develop your social, organisational and communication skills.
- To contribute your own skills to club projects and activities.
- To put into practice personal ideals and principles.
- To enjoy the fellowship of Y's Men International

LOCALLY

- To provide manpower and resources for the community's youth.
- To provide a base for contact and mutual support for other service clubs and community service groups.
- To help the YMCA to organise and carry out programmes.

INTERNATIONALLY

- To work for international understanding and peace through learning about – and sharing with – other people.
- To enable students to visit/study in a foreign country, while living in a Club member's home.
- To participate in raising funds for international projects.
- To encourage and develop leadership to "build a better world for all humankind"

Come join us



For further details: www.ysmen.org