



YWCA
CANBERRA

MEDIA RELEASE

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CONFERENCE FOR COLLEGE GIRLS INSPIRES LEADERS OF TOMORROW

1 May 2015: A Conference to develop the leadership potential of Canberra girls in years 11 and 12 will be held at University of Canberra next Tuesday 5 May 2015.

Hosted by YWCA Canberra, the *She Leads* College Conference will be MC'd by ACT Young Woman of the Year, Zoya Patel, and features a series of discussions and talks from distinguished women, many of whom are young women themselves.

More than 115 college-age girls from both public and private colleges in Canberra and Queanbeyan will participate in the event.

YWCA Canberra Executive Director Frances Crimmins said the organisation had a long history of supporting women into leadership, and the *She Leads* College Conference was a natural extension of the inaugural *She Leads* Conference held in Canberra last year.

"This unique event will provide a safe space for girls to be inspired by young women leaders, and gain the confidence, knowledge and practical skills to kick-start their leadership journeys.

"We know from our research and experience, that it's vitally important that young women are exposed to female role models," Ms Crimmins said.

The *She Leads* College Conference provides an opportunity for young women to explore and hone their leadership identity and values, and reflect on their experiences, strengths, values, and goals for the future.

"Many young women aspire to leadership, and this Conference will equip them with valuable skills and experiences to assist them on their chosen leadership pathway, beyond College.

"We're excited to be inspiring and equipping the next generation of women leaders in the region," Ms Crimmins said.

Speakers and panelists include:

Zoya Patel - MC

Zoya Patel is Communications and Advocacy Officer at YWCA Canberra and is a writer, editor and founder of online feminist arts and literature journal, *Feminartsy*. Zoya is the 2015 ACT Young Woman of the Year, for her commitment to championing women's voices in the media. She was also the recipient of the 2014 Edna Ryan Award for making a feminist difference in the media, one of HerCanberra's 15 Women to Watch in 2015, and the 2014 recipient of the Anne Edgeworth Young Writers' Fellowship. Zoya has received numerous

awards for her writing, and is a Seziure Viva La Novella editor for 2015. She currently writes a column for Right Now, and was Media and Marketing Manager for You Are Here festival in 2015. Zoya is the former editor-in-chief of Lip Magazine, and is currently completing her Master of Communications.

Heather Dawson

An engaging presenter, seasoned facilitator, business leader and coach, Heather blends over 20 years of global leadership experience with Fortune 500 companies with Roar People's reputation for world-class professional development programs and coaching. Heather has held senior leadership positions in the US and Australia within global financial services organisations, including Mercer, Russell Investments and Principal Financial Group. Her leadership experiences – from managing start up divisions, to leading high performing sales teams; to running a division with US\$200 million in annual revenue – enables her to uniquely understand the issues facing leaders today. A native of the Midwest of the United States, Heather holds a Bachelor of Science in Business from the University of Nebraska with a professional certificate in executive coaching from the Institute of Coaching and Coaching Psychology, Sydney Australia.

Carly Findlay

Carly Findlay is a blogger, writer, speaker and appearance activist. She challenges people's thinking about what it's like to have a visibly different appearance. She's written for many publications including *The Guardian*, *Daily Life*, the *ABC*, *Mamamia*, *Frankie* magazine and *BlogHer*. She's used her blog to write about her skin condition, ichthyosis, as well as promoted causes such as Love Your Sister and Donate Life. Carly was named one of Australia's most influential women in the Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards for 2014.

Pia Waugh

Pia is Director of Coordination and Gov 2.0 for the Australian Government CTO, looking at whole of government technology, services and procurement. As part of this work, Pia runs data.gov.au. As an open government and open data ninja, Pia works within the machine to enable greater transparency, democratic engagement, citizen-centric design and real innovation in the public sector and beyond. She believes that tech culture has a huge role to play in achieving better policy planning, outcomes, public engagement and a better public service all round. She was named one of Australia's most influential women in the Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards for 2014.

Sally Moylan

When Sally Moylan is not blazing oppositions with her off spin and aggressive batting style playing WNCL with the ACT Meteors she's a full-time horticulturalist for the parks and presentation team within TAMS. She's passionate about leading a positive, healthy and active life. In 2014, Sally was named ACT Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander of the year for her horticulture, conservation and land management studies. Driven by wanting to be a positive and strong role model for her people and in the hope to inspire them to do what they've always dreamt of doing, she became an ambassador for VET Training and is looking to volunteer and mentor young Indigenous and disadvantaged kids within the community. Sally was named one of the 15 Women to Watch in 2015 by *HerCanberra*, acknowledging her achievements within cricket, work and study.

Ashleigh Grogan

Co-founder of *Young Vagabond* magazine, and works as a project management consultant for not-for-profits. She sometimes has moments of overwhelming panic when she considers all she wants do to help the world and it devastates her that those in the media don't do more with their power of influence. This foodie enjoys a good book and has dimples on her

shoulders, which she thinks she inherited from her dad. Loves: Watching the world, meeting new people.

Haylee Collins

Co-founder of *Young Vagabond* magazine, Haylee is a woman of many titles who balances a fierce passion for the empowerment of women with her desire to create honest, alternative media. She believes in fighting with words for a better world, so long as it's done from the heart. When she's not vagabonding, you will find Haylee relaxing with her nose in a book, lost in other worlds – or excitedly planning to get lost in this one via her next travel adventure.

Conference sponsors and partners include:

- ACT Government Office for Women
- Defence Force Recruiting
- The Rotary Club of Belconnen
- University of Canberra
- Goosebumps
- Newcastle
- HESTA
- Belconnen Fresh Food Markets

- ENDS -

Frances Crimmins and Zoya Patel are available for interview.

Media contact: Joanna Allebone 0450 962 842

About YWCA Canberra: YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women's issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 300 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children's services, community development, housing, youth services, women's leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership. For more information visit:

www.ywca-canberra.org.au

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