

# Y QUEENSLAND ANNUAL REPORT



CELEBRATING OUR

PEOPLE



# 2024 / 25





## **Acknowledgement of Country**

Y Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and operate. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and recognise their continuing connection to land, community and culture.

THE Y REFLECT R.A.P ARTWORK  
BY ARTIST CHAD BRIGGS





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## Values

Honesty Caring Respect Responsibility

## Vision

We create healthy,  
connected and  
thriving communities

## Strategy Statement

Our Y will achieve this vision through: developing community hubs that respond to the needs of the local community; providing real opportunities for all people to grow in body, mind and spirit: creating social enterprises that support the organisation's financial viability and mission; empowering young people; developing a safe, resilient, unbreakable organisation.



# Our Four Pillars



## Community Wellbeing

**Human Services, Health Services, Risk and Food**

Y Queensland believes that every person should have the means to grow and thrive in body, mind and spirit while taking care of their individual and collective wellbeing.



## Meaningful Work

**Education, Commerce, Finance, Logistics, Technology and Construction**

Y Queensland believes that all young people deserve the right to learn, engage in flexible dignified and meaningful work and build sustainable livelihoods.



## A Sustainable Planet

**Agriculture, Engineering, Ecology, Tourism and Utilities**

Y Queensland believes that we should all commit and take action for the protection and regeneration of our planet, preparing for a just transition to a world where humans live in full harmony with nature.



## A Just World

**Law, Public Services, Policy and Communications**

Y Queensland believes in the power of young people and communities to promote and advance justice, peace, equity and human rights for all.

At the 2022 YMCA World Council AGM, all Associations committed to align their own strategy with the **four pillars** and report annually on their progress.



## Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I hope you enjoy our 2024/25 Annual Report. The theme of this year's report is Celebrating Our Y People.

At Y Queensland, everything we do begins with our people. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our incredible staff and volunteers, whose dedication and care bring our mission to life every day. Their passion, skills and values create life-changing impacts across our communities.

For more than 160 years, Y Queensland has been a trusted part of communities across the State. The Y is where children learn and grow, young people find their voice, families connect and older generations thrive. Each year, I am reminded that our greatest strength lies in the resilience and generosity of the people who make up the Y, our staff, volunteers, partners, participants and communities.

This past year has been one of growth and impact. Our Children's Services have expanded, providing more families with safe and supportive environments. The Schools' Breakfast Program continues to ensure thousands of young people start the day with a nutritious meal. Y Schools

Queensland is offering more alternative education pathways in inclusive settings. We are expanding our affordable housing facilities to give more individuals and families a place to call home. Our Fitness and Recreation services promote health and wellbeing across all ages, and our Cancer Survivor Program has grown, supporting more people to rebuild strength and confidence after treatment. To our partners, funders and donors, thank you for your trust and generosity, which allows us to reach more people than ever before.

To our dedicated Board and especially our Chair Heather Allan, thank you for your leadership and guidance.

Looking ahead, our vision is clear: to create healthy, connected and thriving communities across Queensland. With your support, I am confident we will continue to grow, innovate and make a lasting difference.

DAMIAN FOLEY

**Chief Executive Officer** Y Queensland



## Message from the President of the Board

As President of the Board, it is my privilege to reflect on another remarkable year at Y Queensland. Our 2024/25 Annual Report celebrates the incredible people at the heart of our organisation, staff, volunteers and community members, whose dedication and passion make real change possible.

Y Queensland continues to be a trusted presence across the state, providing safe spaces, support and opportunities for children, young people, families and seniors. Our strength lies in the skill and commitment of our people who bring our mission to life each day. From Children's Services and Y Schools Queensland to the Schools' Breakfast Program, affordable housing initiatives, fitness and recreation programs, and community centres, the stories in this report show the profound difference being made in our communities.

As a Board, we are proud to provide governance and oversight that ensures Y Queensland remains sustainable, ethical and mission-driven. We celebrate the growth of our services and the ways we continue to innovate to meet evolving community needs. This year, we have

marked milestones, opened new centres and witnessed countless acts of kindness and commitment. These achievements are a testament to what is possible when people are empowered and supported to do their best work.

I extend my sincere thanks to our CEO, Damian Foley, and his leadership team, along with our staff, volunteers, partners, donors and funders. Your trust, generosity and collaboration enable Y Queensland to expand our reach, strengthen communities and transform lives. Together, we live the values of Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility, creating healthy, connected and thriving communities across Queensland.

Finally, I acknowledge my fellow Board Directors for their unwavering support and guidance. Your commitment ensures Y Queensland remains strong, accountable and positioned for continued impact.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

HEATHER ALLAN

**President of the Board** Y Queensland



# Board of Directors

Y QUEENSLAND BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND Y-CARE (SOUTH EAST QLD) INC. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Board and Management Committee of the Y give their time and expertise freely and generously to help us become a sustainable organisation that has a positive impact on communities across Queensland.



Heather Allan  
PRESIDENT



Toolah Olsen  
VICE PRESIDENT



Ian Smyllie  
VICE PRESIDENT



Ross Mason  
BOARD MEMBER



Cath Parker  
BOARD MEMBER



Andrew Campbell  
BOARD MEMBER



Tom Stephenson  
TREASURER



Leanne Geppert  
BOARD MEMBER



Richard Edwards OAM  
BOARD MEMBER

# Safeguarding Children and Young People at Y Queensland

At the Y Queensland, the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of everything we do. Every child has the right to feel safe, be safe and thrive in an environment that nurtures their growth. **Safeguarding is not just a responsibility – it is part of our identity and culture, shaping how we recruit, train and support our people and guiding the way we design safe spaces across all our services.**

We take a proactive approach by employing qualified staff and volunteers who are carefully screened and trained to uphold the highest standards of care. All must hold a current Working with Children Check, complete safeguarding interviews and reference checks and undertake annual Feel Safe, Be Safe training to ensure they can recognise, respond to and prevent harm.

Our Feel Safe, Be Safe Framework underpins our approach, built on three pillars: Culture, Environment and Operations. This framework drives accountability and continuous improvement, empowering our people to take action and encouraging a culture of “if you see something, hear something, or feel something, tell someone”.

To give families and communities confidence, our practices are independently reviewed by the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF). The ACF Independently Reviewed stamp is a mark of trust, showing our programs and environments meet rigorous child safety standards.

Safeguarding is central to our mission, ensuring the Y remains a place where children and young people are safe, supported and respected.



## Reconciliation at Y Queensland

Y Queensland acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this nation and the custodians of the world's oldest living cultures. We honour their enduring connection to land, waters and community and are committed to listening, learning and walking alongside First Nations peoples on the journey towards reconciliation.

Our vision is to help create healthier, happier communities that embrace all Australians. We believe strong communities are built on respect, understanding and belonging. This requires an honest recognition of our nation's history and a shared commitment to shaping a better future together.

In May 2022, on National Sorry Day, the Y Queensland launched its first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This plan provides a framework centred on relationships, respect and

opportunities, guiding our actions to strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, create meaningful opportunities and foster cultural learning across our organisation.

Across our programs and services, the Y actively embeds reconciliation - through partnerships with Elders and local communities, cultural education activities, the inclusion of First Nations art and language in our centres, participation in NAIDOC events and support for initiatives such as language programs, cultural tours and community collaborations.

Reconciliation is a continuous journey. At the Y Queensland, we are committed to walking this path with humility, respect and determination, ensuring that equality, inclusion and justice are at the heart of our work and our communities.



**Our vision is to help create healthier, happier communities that embrace all Australians.**



# Supporting Communities Across Queensland Through Our Programs & Services

## Our 4 Key Service Areas

1

### Housing, Hospitality and Retail



**Safe and Affordable Housing**  
Managed **127 affordable** housing units



**Hotel**  
84% occupancy

**Community Centres**  
Delivered over **\$10 million** in community value  
Benefited over **4,400 people** weekly

**Camping**  
Hosted **13,609** campers  
**Op Shops**  
**3** Op Shops in South-East QLD

2

### Y Schools Queensland



**228 Certificate Courses**

**Student Enrolment**  
Educated **912** students across **11** campuses

**Youth Centres**  
**5** embedded Youth and Community Centres

3

### Children's Services



**Outside School Hours Care**  
**82,000** attendances per fortnight

**+3 New OSHC Services**

**Early Learning**  
**26,775** attendances across two Early Learning Centres

4

### Fitness and Recreation



**Participation**  
Engaged **965,985** people

**Gymnastics**  
Engaged **5,500** gymnasts

**Cancer Survivor Program**  
Supported **141** survivors



### YMCA Schools' Breakfast Program

Provided **2,334,578 meals**  
Served **58,365** breakfasts every week  
Supported **429** schools



# Housing, Hospitality and Retail

Our Housing, Hospitality and Retail operations are a powerful blend of community service, social enterprise and sustainability, all working together to create lasting impact across Queensland.



## YMCA Schools' Breakfast Program

No child should start the day hungry. We serve more than 58,365 breakfasts every week in 429 schools, helping children learn and thrive daily.



## Y Camping (Camp Warrawee)

Just 35 minutes north of Brisbane, Camp Warrawee offers 30+ outdoor adventure activities designed to build life skills, leadership and teamwork.



## Community Centres

With 10 centres across SEQ, our spaces bring people together - supporting youth, seniors, cultural events and emergency needs.



## Safe and Affordable Housing

127 community housing units across Nerang and Slacks Creek provide safe, stable homes and support services that empower tenants to live independently.



## Op Shops

Our 3 Op Shops turn second-hand goods into community impact, reducing landfill, funding programs and offering vocational training.



## George Williams Hotel

A thriving social enterprise in Brisbane CBD, employing 30 hospitality staff and reinvesting every dollar of profit back into the community.



## Kerry's Story

### YMCA SCHOOLS' BREAKFAST PROGRAM

# A Decade of Dedication at the Y

For more than a decade, Kerry has been a dedicated volunteer at the YMCA Schools' Breakfast Program, bringing warmth, skill and unwavering commitment to a cause she deeply believes in. Her efforts behind the scenes and on the ground have helped ensure thousands of Queensland children start their school day ready to learn and thrive.

Kerry's connection to the Y began long before she started volunteering. In 2006, as Executive Director – Schools for the Logan, Albert and Beaudesert region, she helped recommend schools for the launch of this vital program, recognising the difference it could make.

After retiring in 2012, Kerry returned as a volunteer, juggling essential administrative tasks like managing orders and vouchers, alongside serving breakfasts, packing deliveries and shopping for supplies whenever needed. Her impact goes beyond daily duties. Kerry has been instrumental in securing vital funding, including resources like a truck, freezer and significant contributions towards affordable housing projects.

Despite a busy life filled with family, part-time work and "grandma duties", Kerry volunteers every Friday morning. Kerry is often more fully embraced as a beloved member of the team rather than a volunteer.

She regularly joins updates, celebrations and catch-ups with warehouse and admin staff.

**"Volunteering with the Y gives me a sense of purpose. Knowing I'm helping children start their day with something nourishing is incredibly rewarding."**

She adds, "since the program started in 2006, we have delivered over 12 million breakfasts to school children across Queensland. I'm proud to be part of that. It's an achievement that reflects the dedication of everyone involved". Kerry's dedication was recognised in 2018 with the YMCA Australia Volunteer of the Year Award, a well-deserved honour. But for Kerry, the greatest reward is the difference she makes in the lives of children.





## Rose's Story



**SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**  
NOWELL B TAYLOR HOUSE

# A Place to Call Home

**Rose, 83, has lived at Nowell B Taylor House for 12 years. She chose her unit because she loves gardening and it's designed for accessibility, with features like a shower seat and lower fittings.**

"I'm very happy here because I can afford it, which is crucial with high prices. It's safe and I can leave knowing someone is looking after things. That's everything I need."

For Rose, the best part is the low rent. "It might sound trivial, but it's important. I can't think of anything I dislike. It's convenient and suits me perfectly."

When asked about the biggest change since moving in, Rose says, "security is the biggest change, especially as you get older. Many older adults worry about leases ending and don't have that peace of mind".

**"It might sound trivial, but it's important. I can't think of anything I dislike. It's convenient and suits me perfectly."**





## Kevin's Story

 **THE BUZZ**  
AT YARRABILBA

# Supporting Our Community

**“I like coming here and helping people”, says Kevin, a valued volunteer at The Buzz Yarrabilba Community Centre. Since March 2023, Kevin has been part of this supportive community hub where people facing challenges can find guidance, compassion, and practical help.**

The Buzz offers essential services, including counselling and access to professional Justices of the Peace. “Any problems they’ve got with life, they can come here and talk about it”, Kevin explains.

As a Job Consultant, Kevin helps people with resumes, cover letters, certifications, and connects job seekers to opportunities. He also supports new volunteers gaining experience.

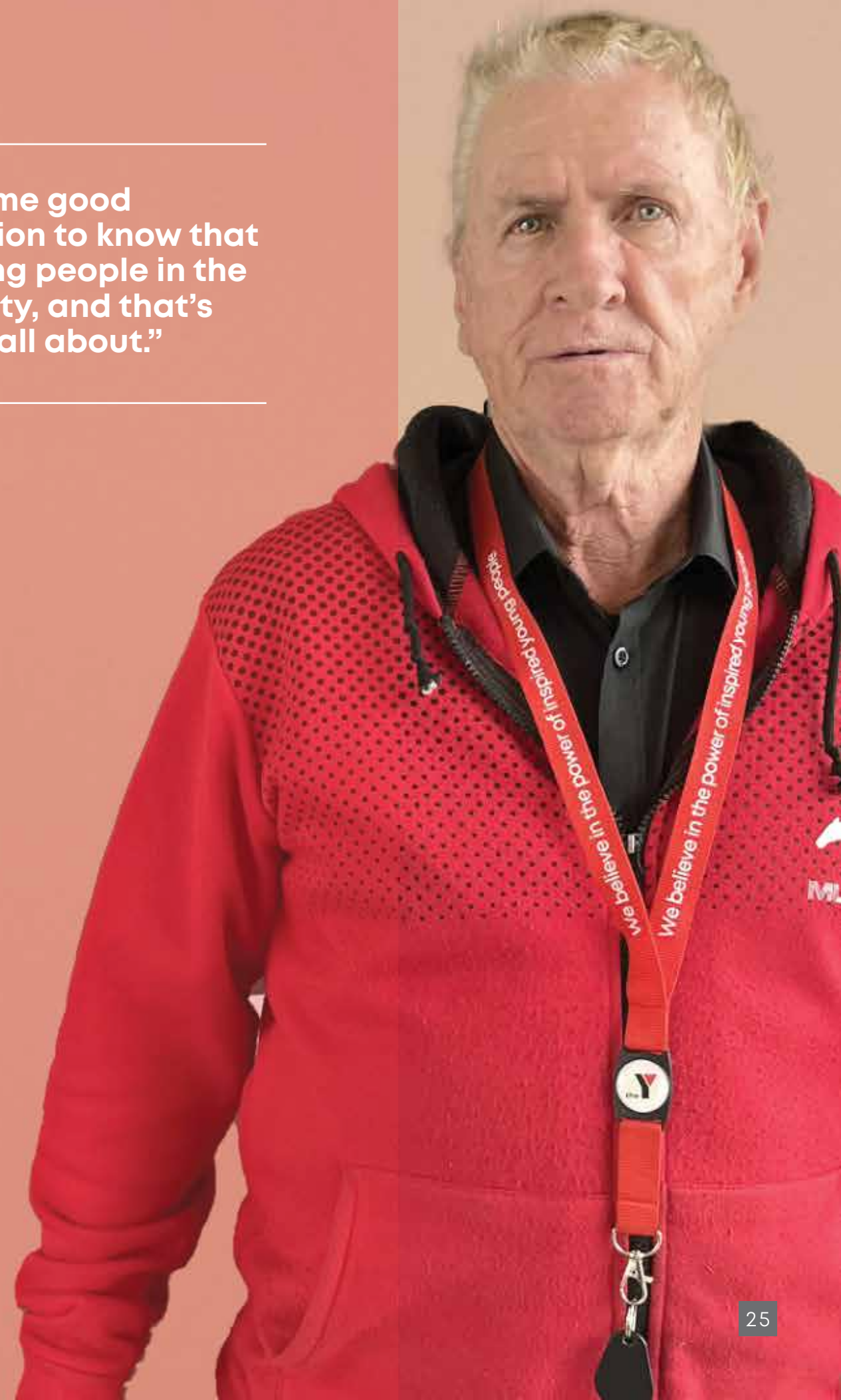
“It gives me good satisfaction to know that I’m helping people in the community and that’s what I’m all about”, Kevin says. He appreciates the encouragement he receives and finds his role very rewarding.

Kevin follows up with job seekers to check progress and volunteers flexibly, assisting with events and other tasks around the centre. His commitment strengthens the community spirit at The Buzz Yarrabilba.

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**“It gives me good satisfaction to know that I’m helping people in the community, and that’s what I’m all about.”**

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## Rojita and Devita's Story



Y SPRINGFIELD LAKES  
COMMUNITY CENTRE

# A Playgroup Adventure

**Rojita and Devita, friends for over ten years, joined the Cheeky Monkey Playgroup at Y Springfield Lakes Community Centre in Term 1 and their journey has been wonderful ever since.**

Rojita first heard about the playgroup from her neighbour and thought it sounded perfect. Excited, she invited Devita to join her. The two friends signed up together and now their little ones, Yuvragi and Devyan, absolutely love it. Rojita says, "Yuvragi looks forward to playgroup every week. It's such a positive experience - not just for the kids but for us mums too. We get to sit back with a cup of tea or coffee, relax and chat with other mums while the kids play happily".

Devita agrees, "every Wednesday morning, as soon as I tell Devyan it's playgroup day, his face lights up with excitement. He has such a good time every week".

One of the best changes, Rojita shared, is how much Yuvragi's routine has improved since joining. "She's more settled now and dropping her off at childcare on the other days has become so much easier. No more tears."

For both families, the Cheeky Monkey Playgroup has become more than just a weekly activity. It is a joyful space where friendships grow, routines get smoother and both kids and mums have a great time together.



**"Every Wednesday morning, as soon as I tell Devyan it's playgroup day, his face lights up with excitement. He has such a good time every week."**



## Carol and Kerry's Story

 Y SPRINGFIELD LAKES  
COMMUNITY CENTRE

# Finding Joy at Ipswich Thriving Seniors

**Before joining the Ipswich Thriving Seniors program, Carol and Kerry felt disconnected and stuck at home.**

Carol shared, "shopping was my only outing and I hate shopping". She tried to connect with others but found it hard, saying, "everybody's lonely but no one wants to talk".

Encouraged by family, they decided to try the program. Carol started with the Gentle Exercise class and despite initial struggles to connect, pushed herself because she knew she needed to do something for herself.

Things changed at the Movie and Mingle session, where Carol met Kerry and others over coffee. Conversations flowed and a new friendship blossomed. Carol invited Kerry to join her in Gentle

Exercise and when Kerry showed up the following week, Carol was thrilled.

Now Carol and Kerry attend everything together: Gentle Exercise, Pound Fit, Cooking Class and more. They enjoy the social atmosphere, shared morning teas and the joy of learning, moving and laughing together. Carol even drives Kerry to the centre, helping her stay connected since she no longer drives. Kerry says, "I don't feel like my life is useless anymore". Carol adds, "I wanted to meet someone like Kerry, easy going and ready for adventures".

Their story shows the positive impact the Ipswich Thriving Seniors program has on seniors' wellbeing. It creates a welcoming space where friendships grow, joy is rediscovered and people feel truly valued.



**"I don't feel like my life is useless anymore. I wanted to meet someone like Kerry, easy going and ready for adventures."**



## Linda's Story

 Y CANNON HILL  
COMMUNITY CENTRE

# Finding Support at Wellness Wednesday

**For two years, Linda has been a friendly face at Y Cannon Hill Community Centre's Wellness Wednesday program. As a mother of two, rising costs make life hard, but the program has become a real source of relief and connection for her family.**

Every Wednesday during school terms, the centre fills with warm smiles, BBQ sausages and conversation over morning tea. For Linda, this weekly event is more than a routine.

"The food parcel we receive each week makes a big difference", she says.

"Knowing I can count on this support takes pressure off and helps my mental health."

The program offers food parcels, toiletries, clothing, laundry services and occasional free haircuts. Once a month, the Thread Together clothing van brings new clothes, giving Linda's children a chance to pick out something special. "It's lovely to see them choosing something new and it's one less thing I have to worry about as a parent", she says.

Linda values the welcoming atmosphere and enjoys chatting and sharing stories over a cup of tea. She also appreciates the outdoor setting, saying it is healing to be outside with people who care. "There is no shame in needing support", Linda says. "This program is inclusive, kind and everyone is welcome."



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**"Knowing I can count on this support takes pressure off and helps my mental health."**

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## Tegan's Story



# Bringing Joy and Nourishment

**When Tegan joined the Y Camping team at Camp Warrawee, the dining hall was being repaired, and meals were served in the sports hall while prepared off-site.**


Despite this, she quickly started creating new menus and testing fresh morning and afternoon tea options. Her creativity has improved kitchen operations and impressed both staff and campers.

Tegan leads the team through busy weeks, preparing thousands of meals including breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks without missing a beat. She loves working with a diverse team and finds the children's smiles during mealtimes the most rewarding part of her role.

"One of the best parts of my day is seeing the children's reactions when we serve something they really enjoy", Tegan says. "Their smiles and energy remind me why I'm passionate about this work."

One special memory is Halloween 2024 when the team decorated the dining hall for kids who missed trick-or-treating. The children's excitement, especially when receiving lollies for dessert, made the effort worthwhile.

Tegan feels her work brings energy and enthusiasm to the team. "It's rewarding to know the food we create lifts spirits and brings people together", she adds. For Tegan, this role is about more than meals. It is about creating experiences that help kids feel supported, included, and excited to try new things.



**"It's rewarding to know the food we create lifts spirits and brings people together."**



## Zoya's story

 Y SPRINGFIELD CENTRAL  
COMMUNITY CENTRE

# A Birthday Wish to Give Back

**When 11-year-old Zoya from Springfield Lakes planned her birthday party, she decided to do something extraordinary. Instead of asking for presents, she wanted to give back to her community. With the help of her mum Archie and the team at Y Springfield Central Community Centre, Zoya turned her birthday into a hamper-packing bee.**

She reached out to local businesses, families and friends for donations and the response was overwhelming. On the big day, Zoya and her friends set up a production line at the Community Centre. Together, they packed more

than 50 hampers filled with food and winter goods, which were later distributed to local young people and families in need.

"I wanted to do something that would make people happy and help families who need a little extra support", Zoya said with a smile.

Her generosity and community spirit left a lasting impression on everyone involved, and as if that was not enough, Zoya is now preparing to take on another challenge with her mum later this year, trekking to Everest Base Camp. What an inspiring way to celebrate a birthday and make a difference.



**"I wanted to do something that would make people happy and help families who need a little extra support."**



## Savannah and Grace's story



Y MANGO HILL  
OP SHOP

# Finding Confidence and Community at Y Op Shop

**At the Y Mango Hill Op Shop, two young volunteers, Savannah and Grace, have discovered more than just work experience. They have gained confidence, made friends and found joy in giving back to their community.**

Savannah joined the team in October 2024 at just 15 years old, hoping to overcome her social anxiety and improve her communication skills. "Volunteering here has been very helpful for me because I have grown up with very bad anxiety and talking to people has always been a struggle. Volunteering here has helped me come out of my shell and get better at talking to new people", she said. Her experience

paid off when she recently secured her first part-time job, a milestone she credits to the skills she built at the Op Shop. "The team here is like another family. They're all so lovely and friendly." Grace joined in May 2025, keen to build customer service skills while giving back. Volunteering three times a week, she loves the social side of the role and has formed a close friendship with Savannah. "We get along really well", she said. Grace enjoys finding hidden gems among the donations, while Savannah loves that "people can give us their old stuff and someone can take it home and make it into something wonderful and love it just as much as the first person".

**"The team here is like another family. They're all so lovely and friendly."**

Together, Savannah and Grace help stock shelves, sort donations, assist customers and bring life to Lulu, the shop's favourite mannequin. Their contributions not only keep the shop running but also raise vital funds for community programs and encourage sustainable shopping. For both young women, the highlight of volunteering is the people. As Savannah shares, "all the other volunteers are so lovely here... it just made me feel like I belonged".





# Y Schools Queensland

**Y Schools Queensland provides alternative high school programs for students in Years 7 to 12 who benefit from a different approach to learning. With 11 campuses across Brisbane, Logan, Ipswich and Bundaberg, Y Schools Queensland combines education with wrap-around wellbeing support to help young people thrive.**

We believe in preparing students for a life of choice, not chance. Guided by the Y's values of Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility, our schools create safe and nurturing environments where every student is supported to grow in confidence, resilience and independence. Each campus takes a tailored approach to meet the needs of its local community, while our multi-disciplinary team of teachers, teacher aides, youth workers, case workers and counsellors provide holistic support to every student.

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**Our evidence-based Thrive framework strengthens mental wellbeing, builds coping skills and helps students develop healthy relationships, setting the foundation for lifelong learning. At Y Schools Queensland, wellbeing is personal, pathways are unique and every step leads towards a brighter future.**

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## Kiarra-Lee's Story

 Y SCHOOLS QUEENSLAND  
BRISBANE SOUTH SENIOR CAMPUS

# Finding Purpose at Y Schools

**At just 18 years old, Kiarra-Lee's journey shows the life-changing impact the right learning environment can have on a young person. Now completing Year 12 at Y Schools Brisbane South Senior Campus in Parkinson, she is on track to graduate with her Queensland Certificate of Education and has a clear vision for her future.**

Mainstream schooling had not been the right fit, marked by a lack of support and strained teacher relationships. After repeated suspensions and disengagement, she was referred to Y Schools by the Queensland Department of Education. At first reluctant, she soon

discovered the school's wellbeing focus, smaller classes, pathways programs, and the presence of both a teacher and youth worker in every classroom. "It was a good choice to come to this school. Since being here I've had opportunities open up and the support has led me to believe in myself", Kiarra-Lee said. Encouraged by staff, she stepped into leadership, becoming one of five senior student leaders at her campus. She leads weekly check-ins, represents her peers and has taken part in Leadership Forums with other schools. Earlier this year, she toured Queensland Parliament and met with a State MP. Her Head of School, Sean Hodgson, said: "from day one it was clear she was a talented, compassionate and driven

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**"It was a good choice to come to this school. Since being here I've had opportunities open up and the support has led me to believe in myself."**

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young woman. She leaves us with an amazing future beckoning and we'll miss her more than she will know". A hands-on learner, Kiarra-Lee has also embraced sport and skills training. She competed at the AFL State Championships in Cairns, completed barista and barbering courses, and is working towards her Cert III in Health and Fitness. Inspired by the Y Schools Career Expo, she is now exploring a career in law enforcement. Reflecting on her journey, she said: "I didn't enjoy going to my old school... but having that support here, you feel welcomed and you want to come in and give it a go". As she prepares to graduate, Kiarra-Lee leaves Y Schools with more than her QCE. She leaves with purpose, confidence and belief in herself.



## Angela's Story



Y SCHOOLS  
QUEENSLAND

# Inspiring Change at Y Schools Queensland

**Angela Waugh joined Y Schools Queensland in 2022 as Head of Campus, drawn by the opportunity to be part of a school community where every young person can genuinely thrive.**

"I was ready to be part of something that truly sees young people for who they are - their strengths, their potential, and their stories. Y Schools felt like a place where education meets heart." From her very first day, Angela felt the energy, dedication and purpose that define Y Schools. She was inspired by the incredible work of teachers, youth workers, wellbeing teams and administrators who show up every day to make a difference in students' lives.

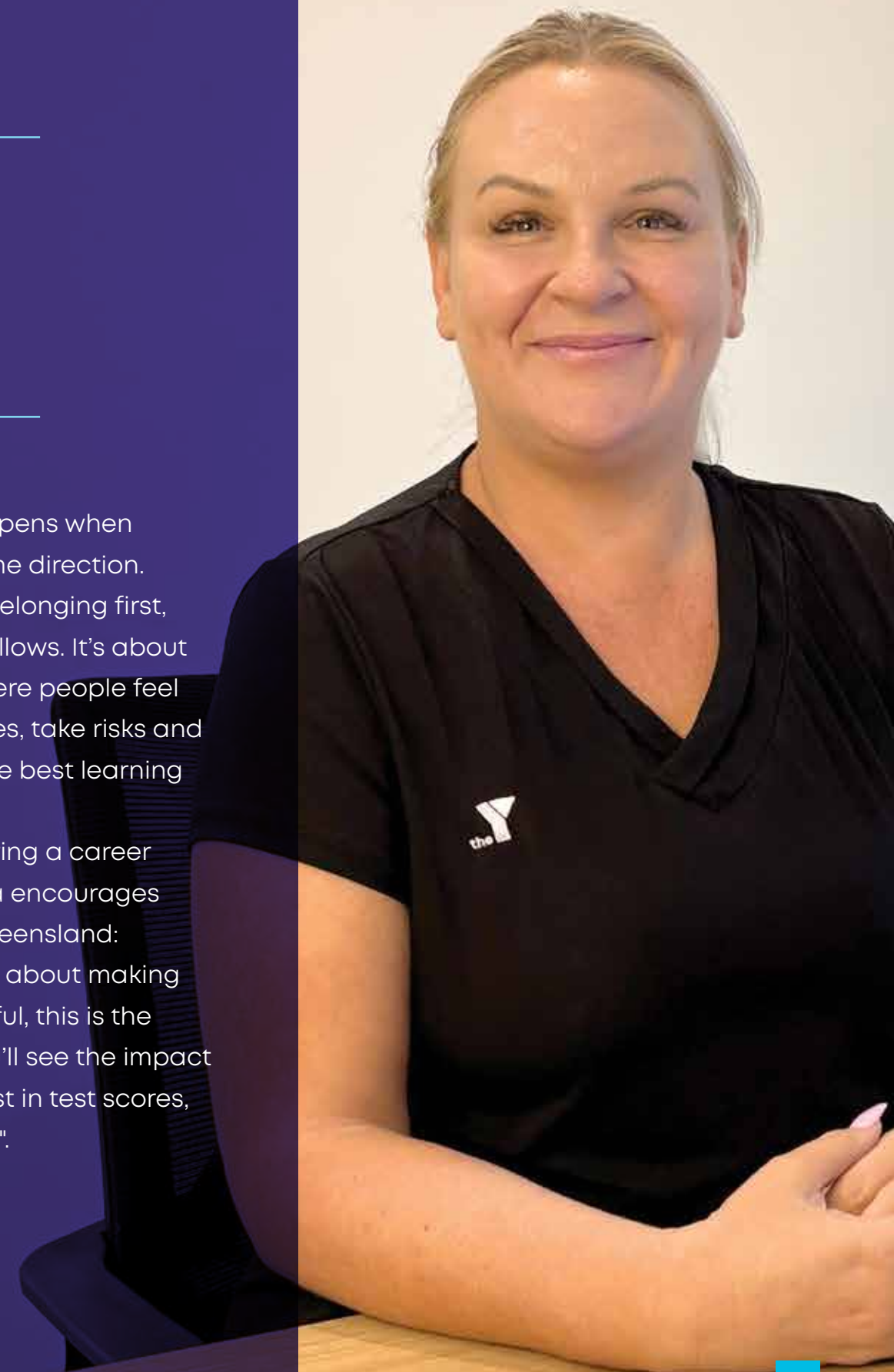
As time went on, Angela's journey led her to the role of Principal - a position in which she now guides and supports both staff and students across all campuses. She celebrates the way small, consistent efforts lead to big achievements, helping students overcome challenges and discover their potential. "You can feel it in every classroom - the belief that even small steps forward are worth celebrating. That's where transformation begins." Angela continues to foster a culture where collaboration, laughter and open communication are valued, ensuring students and staff feel heard, supported and encouraged.

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**"Y Schools felt like a place where education meets heart."**

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"The real magic happens when we all pull in the same direction. When we focus on belonging first, learning naturally follows. It's about creating spaces where people feel safe to be themselves, take risks and grow; that's when the best learning happens." For anyone considering a career in education, Angela encourages joining Y Schools Queensland: "if you're passionate about making education meaningful, this is the place. Every day you'll see the impact of your work - not just in test scores, but in lives changed".





## Tom's Story



Y SCHOOLS QUEENSLAND  
LOGAN CAMPUS

# Building Futures Through Y Schools

**When Tom joined Y Schools straight out of university, he was looking for more than just a job. Three years later, he says it was one of the best decisions he has ever made.**

For Tom, each day is different. Mornings might begin with laughter in the staffroom before moving into lessons, lunchtime basketball, or even boxing sessions in the gym.

Beyond academics, he and his colleagues focus on building genuine connections with young people, supporting them in ways that go far deeper than a traditional classroom.

"It's like one big family", Tom shares.

"You see sides of the young people you wouldn't in mainstream schools, and that helps you actually make a difference in their education."

The flexibility and enrichment programs at Y Schools keep Tom motivated, while also offering him opportunities for professional growth. Most of all, he values the chance to empower students, helping them feel seen, supported and ready for the future.

**"You see sides of the young people you wouldn't in mainstream schools and that helps you actually make a difference in their education."**



## Grace's Story

 Y SCHOOLS QUEENSLAND  
MORETON BAY SENIOR CAMPUS

# A Journey From OSHC to Y Schools

**At Y Queensland, we're proud to support our people as they grow and take on new opportunities. Grace's story shows how a passion for helping young people can evolve into a new career pathway.**

Grace began her journey in Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), where she loved building strong relationships with children and families. One of her most memorable moments was supporting a child who initially struggled to settle in. Through patience and consistency, Grace helped them grow in confidence, connect with peers and thrive. Inspired to work more closely with young people, Grace transitioned into her current role as a Classroom Youth Worker at Mango Hill Senior Campus.

Here, she focuses on student wellbeing, resilience and personal growth. "Both roles are about building relationships and creating safe spaces", Grace explains. "The difference is that now I can walk alongside young people every day in their learning environment and support them through challenges." The Y supported Grace with training, guidance and encouragement, which gave her the confidence to step into this new space. The transition has helped her gain new professional skills while also building personal confidence and a strong sense of purpose. Her advice to others considering a new pathway within the Y: "go for it! With the support of this community, stepping into something new can be an incredibly rewarding experience".

**"The difference is that now I can walk alongside young people every day in their learning environment and support them through challenges."**





# Children's Services

For over 40 years, Y Queensland has supported families with high-quality care that helps children grow in body, mind and spirit. From our first centre in 1977, we now offer Early Learning and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) across Queensland.



### Early Learning (Ages 0–5)

**2 centres**  
Acacia Ridge and  
Sunshine Coast.

Play-based learning  
in safe, engaging  
environments.

Outdoor gardens,  
cubby houses,  
sandpits and shaded  
play areas.

Indoor spaces that  
spark creativity and  
imagination.



### Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

**60 Locations**  
The largest provider  
in Brisbane.

Before and after school  
programs guided by  
dedicated educators.

Leisure-based activities  
that build friendships,  
confidence and  
wellbeing.



### School Holiday Programs

Fun, full-day  
experiences.

**Excursions**  
Parks, movies and  
skating.

**Incursions**  
Pottery, clay, archery  
and more.



## Andrew's Story

 Y OSHC  
KURWONGBAH

# Inspiring Curiosity at Kurwongbah OSHC

**Since 2012, Andrew has been a key team member of Kurwongbah OSHC, bringing energy, creativity and care to every child who walks through the doors.**

For the children, Andrew is more than an Educator. On Science Wednesdays, he turns afternoons into moments of magic where volcanoes erupt, rockets soar and curiosity comes alive. "It's about giving children the chance to explore, discover and know that learning can be an adventure", Andrew explains. His fitness program is another highlight,

where children design their own challenges, support each other and learn that teamwork, persistence and confidence are just as important as strength. Andrew's impact goes beyond activities. Each year, he hosts the Science Wednesday anniversary, bringing families and the community together to celebrate curiosity, bravery, creativity and the joy of learning. Over more than a decade, he has not only shaped programs but also shaped lives, showing children that failure is just another step toward success and that kindness and resilience matter most.

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**"It's about giving children the chance to explore, discover, and know that learning can be an adventure."**

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"At Kurwongbah OSHC, it's the children's smiles and excitement that make it all worthwhile. Seeing them proud of what they can achieve is the best part of my job", says Andrew. Andrew is a mentor, a leader, and an inspiration. His passion and dedication remind us that when one person shows up every day with care and creativity, they can transform a program, a community and the lives of every child they teach.



## Thank You, Y Educators



# The Impact of Y Queensland Educators

**At Y Queensland, we are proud to provide nurturing and inspiring spaces for children across the state. With two Early Learning Centres and 60 Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) centres, our educators create environments where children can grow, explore and thrive. Every word of encouragement and small success celebrated helps shape bright futures.**

Our Educators' passion, care and dedication are at the heart of what we do. From comforting a child on a tough day to sparking curiosity and joy in learning, their commitment makes a real difference for children, families and the

wider community. With 60 OSHC services, Y Queensland remains one of the state's largest OSHC providers, supporting more children and families than ever before. Claire, a parent from one of our OSHC, shares: "the care, patience and dedication you show every day does not go unnoticed. You help our children feel safe and supported while holding them accountable. Your impact goes beyond the hours you spend with the kids; you are shaping their confidence, values and sense of belonging. Thank you for all that you give. You are so appreciated every day".

To all our Educators across Y Queensland, thank you. Your work truly makes a lasting impact on the children and families in our communities.





# Fitness and Recreation

Y Fitness and Recreation promotes physical activity with a focus on inclusivity, accessibility and community wellbeing. We offer a wide range of programs across nine centres in South East Queensland and the Southern Downs, supporting all ages and fitness levels.



Gymnastics for all ages and skill levels, from toddlers to competitive athletes, is available at seven of our centres. Swimming lessons and other water-based fitness programs are available at three centres. Child safety is a top priority and we are independently accredited as a Child Safe Organisation.



Our 24/7 gyms feature modern equipment, personal training and group classes in a supportive environment. We run tailored programs for over-50s and offer a free 12-week physical wellbeing program for people living through and after cancer treatment.



Y Fitness and Recreation is committed to helping individuals lead healthier, happier lives through accessible and community-focused wellness programs.

Our core offerings include **gymnastics, fitness gyms, group classes, swimming lessons and our Cancer Survivor Program.**



## Jackson's Story

 **Y BOWEN HILLS  
FITNESS CENTRE**

# Cancer Survivor Program

**At 24, Jackson has faced challenges few could imagine while living with Germinoma, a rare brain cancer. His recovery has involved countless appointments, fatigue and major life adjustments. Through it all, the YMCA Cancer Survivor Program has given him strength, confidence and renewed energy.**

*survivor*

Jackson has now completed the 12-week program twice, attending two guided sessions each week with tailored exercises at his own pace. For him, the program has been more than physical progress, it has offered connection, encouragement and a supportive community.

**“It was such a friendly group of people and all of the staff here are very welcoming and supportive.”**

The benefits extend well beyond the gym. His endurance and energy have improved, allowing him to enjoy meals out, contribute at home and spend more time with friends. His mum, Angelica, calls the program a “catalyst to normality”, praising both the physical outcomes and the community connection. His support worker, Amanda, has also seen his confidence grow as he engages more socially and feels comfortable in new settings.

While balancing fatigue and medical appointments has been tough, Jackson has kept showing up and building resilience. Most importantly, the program has helped him reclaim a sense of self and everyday life. His courage and perseverance are an inspiration to his family, friends and the wider community.



## Grace's story



Y STAFFORD  
GYMNASTICS CENTRE

# Growing Through Gymnastics at the Y

**Grace has been part of the Y gymnastics community for over six years and in that time she has grown into a confident young athlete who loves both the sport and the friendships it has brought her.**

She started gymnastics in 2019 to improve her balance and coordination. Beginning in the Steps Program, Grace worked hard and eventually progressed into the Open Competitive group, where she now trains twice a week under the guidance of her coach, Jade. She began competing two years ago and has since represented the Y at multiple events,

including regional competitions. Bars are Grace's favourite apparatus and one of her proudest achievements came recently at the Mango Hill Invitational, where she placed first. Grace shared, "winning first on bars made me feel really proud and more confident. I can't wait for my next competition". Jade added, "Grace has always been hardworking. Initially shy, she quietly focused on her tasks. Since joining the Open competitive team, she continues her strong work ethic while also supporting friends with choreography, giving helpful feedback, and sharing laughs during training".

**"Gymnastics has become more than just a sport for Grace. It is a space where she has developed her skills, built resilience and made lasting friendships."**

Supported by her family and the Y coaching team, Grace has grown more confident, connected and strong both in and out of the gym.

For Grace, gymnastics is not just about medals or competitions; it is about growth, community and the joy of achieving something through dedication and teamwork.



## Karen's Story

 **WARWICK INDOOR RECREATION  
& AQUATIC CENTRE**

# Leading Community Impact at WIRAC

**At Y Queensland, we're proud to celebrate our people who lead with passion and create meaningful impact in their communities. Karen's story highlights how dedication to wellbeing and connection can transform lives.**

Karen began her journey at the Y over 11 years ago in roles including Assistant Manager and Aquatics Coordinator. As a Warwick local, she has always cared deeply about the people and families who visit WIRAC. One of her most memorable moments is seeing a child

swim independently for the first time or witnessing a member regain confidence after an injury. These everyday successes show the powerful impact of creating safe, inclusive and supportive spaces.

Now as Centre Manager, Karen leads the WIRAC team, guiding programs that help swimmers of all ages and abilities grow in confidence and resilience. "Every achievement matters", Karen explains. Her advice for anyone looking to make a difference: "lead with care, listen and celebrate progress along the way".

**"When we invest  
in people, great  
things happen."**





## William's Story

 **Y JAMBOREE HEIGHTS  
FITNESS CENTRE**

# Strength, Connection and Community at the Y

For more than 23 years, William has been a proud member of the Veterans Fitness group at Y Jamboree Heights. From the very beginning, the program has been a place where veterans can stay active, build strength and connect with others in a supportive environment.

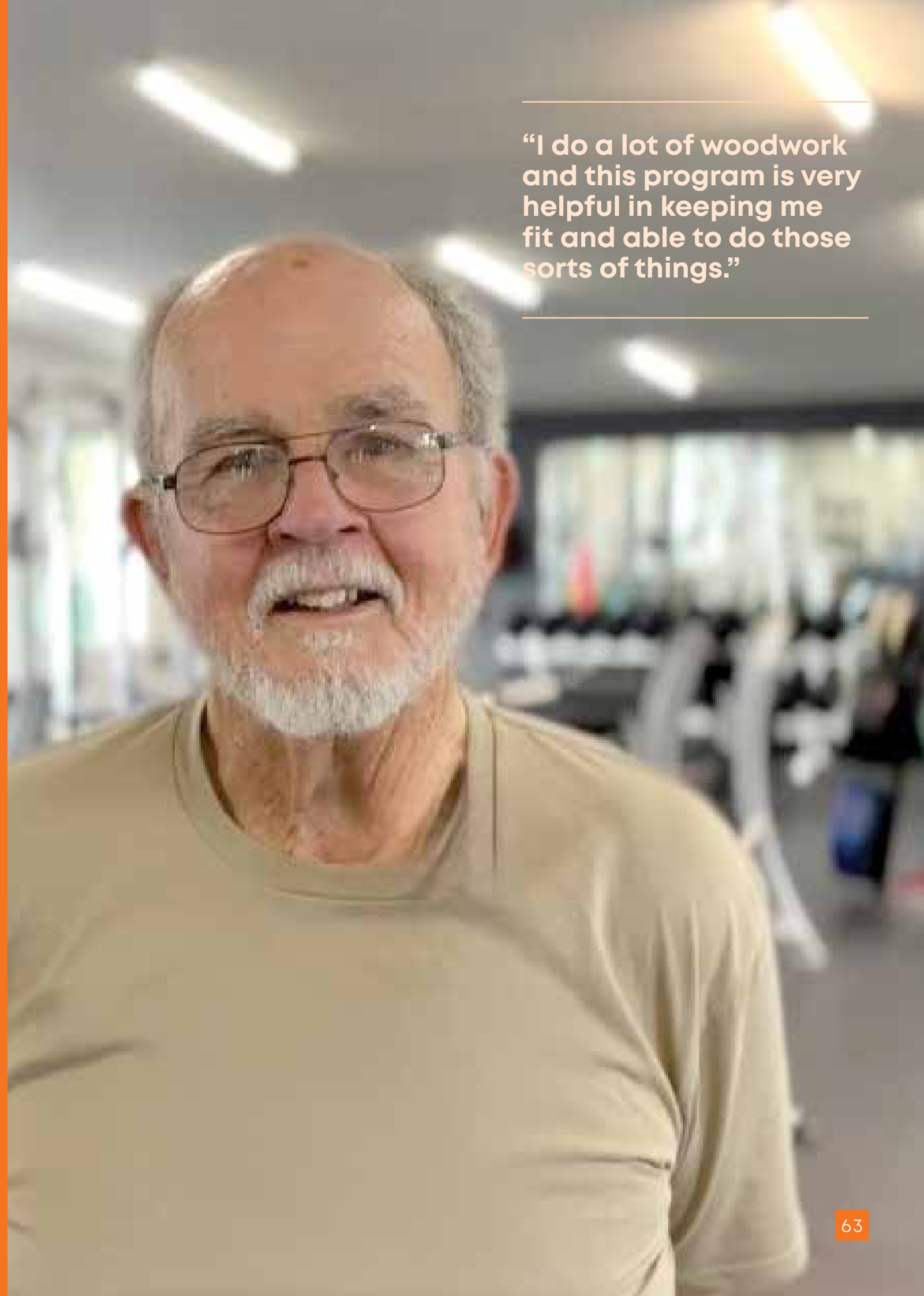
"It enables me to do the things I want to do", William says. "I do a lot of woodwork and this program is very helpful in keeping me fit and able to do those sorts of things."

The group meets twice a week for one-hour sessions led by experienced exercise physiologists. Each session includes functional exercises, core work and regular health checks, all tailored to suit the needs of participants.

Beyond fitness, the program fosters camaraderie and friendship.

"It's a good group, it's a social group", William explains. "We mix here, we mix at coffee and socially at different times throughout the year. We also include our partners as well." Many participants continue the connection outside the gym through coffee catch-ups and involvement in local RSL activities. Reflecting on the impact, William is clear: "I think it's the best thing I ever did". For him and his fellow veterans, the Y Veterans Fitness Program is more than exercise – it's a place to stay strong, build friendships and enjoy life to the fullest.

**"I do a lot of woodwork  
and this program is very  
helpful in keeping me  
fit and able to do those  
sorts of things."**





## Emily, Emily and Evie's Story

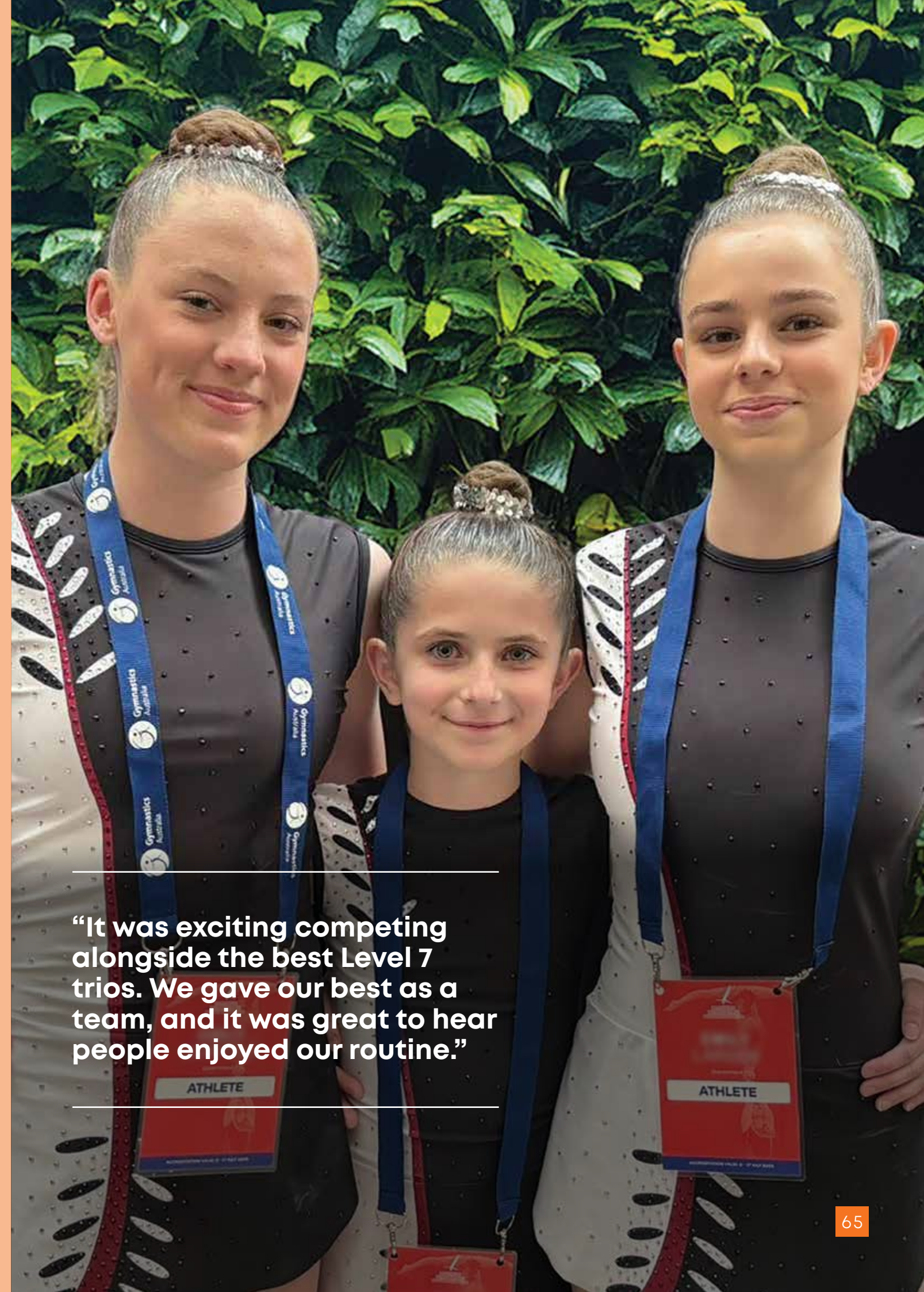
 Y MANGO HILL  
GYMNASTICS CENTRE

# Our Gymnasts Shine at Nationals

**Earlier this year, Emily, Emily and Evie from Y Mango Hill represented Queensland at the Australian Gymnastics Championships on the Gold Coast. Competing as a Level 7 acrobatic trio, they delivered two impressive routines that wowed both judges and spectators.**

For Evie, it was her first national competition and for the Emilys, their first time as bases. Coach Melissa said, "I am very proud of my trio. They put two very good routines on the floor without any falls and received positive feedback from the judges".

Emily reflected, "It was exciting competing alongside the best Level 7 trios. We gave our best as a team and it was great to hear people enjoyed our routine. A big thank you to our coach Melissa for her support and encouragement". Their performance highlights the talent, resilience and community spirit fostered in Y Gymnastics programs, where dedication and teamwork help young athletes soar.



**"It was exciting competing alongside the best Level 7 trios. We gave our best as a team, and it was great to hear people enjoyed our routine."**



# YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament

**The YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament (QYP) gives young people a unique opportunity to create real change. Participants gain hands-on experience in parliamentary processes, develop leadership and advocacy skills, and become the voice of youth in their communities.**



## 2025 Program Highlights

- Celebrated 30th anniversary of QYP in 2025.
- 471 nominations, 93 Youth Members selected
- 129 meetings with MPs, 23 shadowing experiences
- 24 volunteers contributed 4,000+ hours supporting the program



## Youth Members

- Represent youth in their electorates
- Advise politicians and decision-makers
- Develop leadership, public speaking and advocacy skills



## 2024 Achievements

- Passed multiple Youth Acts:
  - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (First Nations Repatriation)
  - Clean Water Regulation
  - Disaster Management (Putting Communities First)
- Shadowed MPs, attended legislative meetings, engaged with communities



## Youth Advisory Council

- 110 young people participated in 2025
- Consulted on committees, took part in Mid-Year Online Parliamentary Debate
- Built advocacy, public speaking and connections with Youth Members



## Jasmin's Story



# Empowering Youth Voices through QYP


**Jasmin's YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament (QYP) journey began in 2020 as the Youth Member for Maroochydore.**

Despite COVID-19 disruptions, she embraced the experience, developed valuable skills and formed lasting connections. "Even though my first year was so different from what I imagined, it showed me how adaptable and resilient we could all be", she reflects.

In 2022, Jasmin joined the QYP Executive Volunteer Team as a Media and Marketing Officer, helping to showcase the Program through initiatives like the What's Scooping On, QYP? podcast and boosting QYP's Instagram to become the most-followed Youth Parliament account in Australia. "I wanted to give back to the Program that

had already given me so much", she says. At the end of 2024, Jasmin was elected as the 30th Youth Governor for 2025, focusing on amplifying diverse voices, especially from regional communities and people with disabilities. Living with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome and being hard of hearing, she is passionate about accessibility and representation. "Leadership isn't reserved for one type of person – everyone's voice matters and everyone's story deserves to be heard", she explains.

Through her QYP journey, Jasmin has shown that there is a place for everyone, regardless of their interest in law or politics. "If even one person sees my journey and realises they belong here too, then I've done my job", she says, reflecting her commitment to community, inclusion and the power of youth voices to shape the future.

A portrait of Jasmin, a young woman with long brown hair, wearing glasses and a black jacket over a dark green shirt. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a wooden fence.

**"It showed me how adaptable and resilient we could all be."**



# Our Corporate Services

At the heart of Y Queensland’s operations is our Corporate Services team, based at 105 and 107 Brunswick Street in Fortitude Valley. While they may not be on the front line, their role is vital in ensuring our four operational areas run smoothly and deliver the best outcomes for our communities.

Together, Corporate Services provide the foundations that allow Y Queensland’s schools, community centres, housing, fitness, children's services and retail operations to flourish. Their work behind the scenes ensures that every program, every service and every interaction in our communities is backed by strong systems, expert guidance and a commitment to excellence.



**Finance**  
Manages resources responsibly and sustainably.



**Information Technology**  
Delivers reliable systems and digital solutions to keep our teams connected and supported.



**Marketing & Communications**  
Shares our stories, programs and grows impact.



**People & Culture**  
Supports staff and volunteer growth.



**Safeguarding**  
Maintains the highest standards of safety and trust.



**Property**  
Oversees the maintenance, development and construction of assets and facilities.



**Risk & Compliance**  
Ensures accountability and mitigates risk.



**Workplace Health & Safety**  
Ensures safe environments for staff, volunteers and participants.



**Research & Evaluation**  
Provides data and insights to guide decisions and strengthen programs.



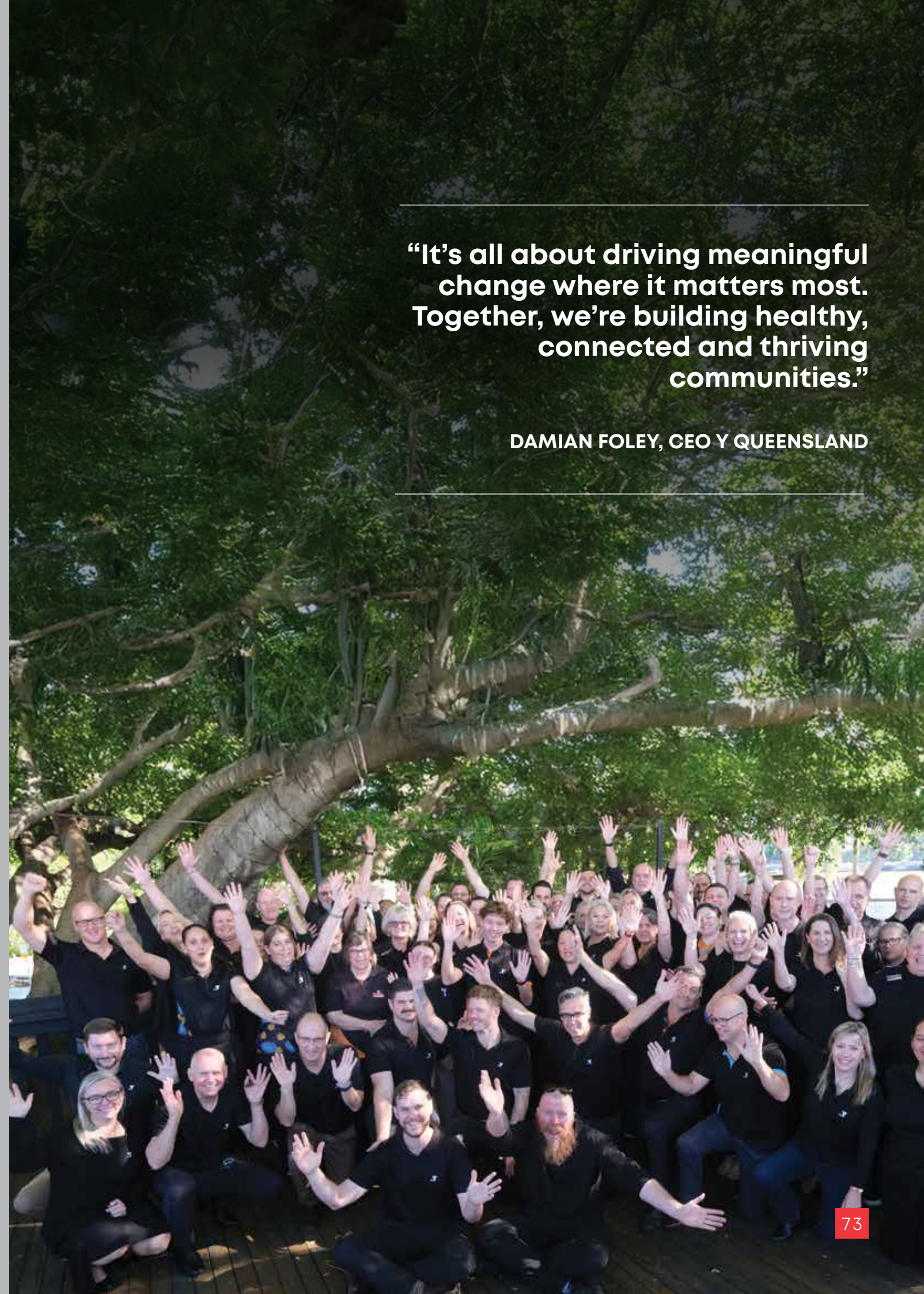
# Establishment Managers' Strategy Day

**In June 2025, more than 70 of our leaders from across Y Queensland came together for the Establishment Managers' Strategy Day to plan the execution of our 2025/26 Strategic Plan.**

The year ahead promises to be one of impact and growth. Our focus will be on strengthening our schools, childcare services, fitness and recreation centres, affordable housing programs, community centres, schools' breakfast program and more. We are committed to staying connected with each other and our communities. By building strong partnerships with government, research bodies and corporates, we will harness the collective strength of our diverse programs to help Queensland communities thrive.

**"It's all about driving meaningful change where it matters most. Together, we're building healthy, connected and thriving communities."**

**DAMIAN FOLEY, CEO Y QUEENSLAND**





# Y Queensland Employee Recognition Program

**At Y Queensland, we believe our people are at the heart of everything we do. Their passion, dedication and achievements shape the positive outcomes we deliver for our students, customers and communities every day.**

Our Employee Recognition Program celebrates and values those contributions, ensuring our people feel recognised and appreciated for the difference they make. From small daily moments of gratitude to organisation-

wide awards, the program fosters a culture of appreciation, inclusion and high performance. Two of our key initiatives include the monthly Shining Star Award, which recognises employees who embody our values and deliver service excellence, and the Y Excellence Awards, which highlight outstanding individuals and teams across the organisation each year. Together, these awards celebrate the dedication, innovation and impact of our people and reinforce the importance of living our mission and values.





# Y Excellence Awards 2024

Last year we proudly held our first Y Excellence Awards, a celebration of the outstanding contributions of our staff and volunteers across Y Queensland. The awards recognise exceptional service, innovation, leadership and teamwork that bring our vision of building healthy, connected and thriving communities to life.

## Here are the Winners of Y Excellence Awards 2024



Matthew Chalmers  
**Excellence in Leadership**



Judy Blank  
**Volunteer of the Year**



IT Team  
**Mission Impact**



Y School Logan Senior  
**Safeguarding**



People and Culture Team  
**Service Excellence**



Y Schools' Breakfast Program Team  
**Mission Impact**



Y Op Shop Team  
**Sustainability**



Y Camping Catering Team  
**Service Excellence**



AJ Chinchkhede  
**Innovation and Creativity**



The Marketing Team  
**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**



The OSHC Community of Practice Team  
**One Team**



# Length of Service Recognition

At Y Queensland, we proudly recognise Employees, Volunteers and Board Members who have completed 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service at Y Queensland in 2025. Their commitment, hard work and contributions have been vital in supporting our programs, services and communities. This milestone celebrates their loyalty, impact and the values they bring to in helping Y Queensland create healthy, connected and thriving communities. This year's awards celebrate milestones reached in the 2024/25 financial year.

## 25 Years

**Will Sambrook**  
Chief Operations Officer  
Corporate Services

## 20 Years

**Yvette Lowe**  
Receptionist  
Fitness and Recreation

**Samantha Hutchins**  
Assistant Coordinator  
OSHC

## 15 Years

**Sylvia Watson**  
Administrative Assistant  
Education

**Ben Jorna**  
Area Operations Manager  
OSHC

**Erin Prickett**  
Administrator  
OSHC

## 10 Years

**Rick Taylor**  
Maintenance Caretaker  
Affordable Housing

**Nikki Mussell**  
Pathways Lead (Senior)  
Education

**Ellen Kelso**  
Group Fitness Instructor  
Fitness and Recreation

**Karen Peters**  
Centre Manager  
Fitness and Recreation

**Troy Sommerville**  
Group Fitness Instructor  
Fitness and Recreation

**Graeme Ferguson**  
Camp Manager  
Outdoor Recreation

**Brent Greenfield**  
Operations Logistics  
Coordinator  
Outdoor Recreation

**Cherie Chan**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Kelleigh Roberts**  
Coordinator  
OSHC

**James Woodgate**  
Quality Practice Manager  
OSHC



# Length of Service Recognition

## 5 Years

**Heather Allan**  
Board Chair and President

**Penny Anderson**  
Accounts Officer  
Corporate Services

**Benjamin Refeld**  
Wellbeing Case Worker  
Education

**Bianca Stabler**  
Wellbeing Counsellor  
Education

**Coral Symonds**  
Teacher  
Education

**Donna Pine**  
School Administrator  
Education

**Giselle Lawrie**  
Senior Practitioner Wellbeing  
Education

**Jenna McMahon**  
Teacher  
Education

**Lisa Tittle**  
Youth Worker (Classroom),  
Education

**Sam Strong**  
Head of Campus  
Education

**Zachary Cunningham**  
Youth Worker (Classroom)  
Education

**Amy Dingeldei**  
KinderGym Leader  
Fitness and Recreation

**Brooke Seawright**  
Gymnastics Coach  
Fitness and Recreation

**Maike Hager**  
Gymnastics Coach  
Fitness and Recreation

**Sonya Andrews**  
Customer Care Coordinator  
Fitness and Recreation

**Jordan Devine**  
Program Coordinator  
Outdoor Recreation

**Mitchell Bell**  
Outdoor Education Instructor  
Outdoor Recreation

**Amy Adams**  
Coordinator  
OSHC

**Beem Magno**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Chandhie Etipola**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Dana Bozic**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Janice Genge**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Jacques Van Rensburg**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Joy Ondrus**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Karen Lees**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Kristy Commens**  
Inclusive Practice  
Coordinator  
OSHC

**Mason Hayden**  
Relief Educator  
OSHC

**Nat O'Hare**  
Coordinator  
OSHC

**Natasha Chappel**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Natasha Rath**  
Marketing and Business  
Development Support  
OSHC

**Sharlene Sharkey**  
Assistant Coordinator  
OSHC

**Taia Robertson**  
Coordinator  
OSHC

**Taylah Farrar**  
Assistant Coordinator  
OSHC

**Teresa Walker**  
Educator  
OSHC

**Thomas Peisley**  
Coordinator  
OSHC



# Donors, Partners and Supporters

**We are deeply grateful to our donors, corporate partners and supporters whose generosity and belief in our mission make a lasting difference across Queensland communities. Your contributions help us deliver essential programs, expand our reach and create opportunities for children, young people, families and seniors to thrive. We are also grateful to our staff for their donations which directly support our community programs.**

## Donors

Club Parkview  
Club Southside  
KDL Property Group  
Louis Hughes  
Southside Bingo  
Southside Community Group

## Funders

### Australian Government

Department of Education

### Queensland Government

Department of Housing and Public Works  
Department of Education  
Department of Families, Seniors,  
Disability Services and Child Safety  
Youth Justice and Victim Support  
Department of Sport, Racing and  
Olympic and Paralympic Games  
Department of Justice

## Corporate Partners

Clem Jones Foundation  
Hand Heart Pocket The Charity of  
Freemasons Queensland  
Compare the Market  
Leisure Concepts Corporate Pty Ltd

## University and Institution Partners

Queensland University of Technology  
University of Queensland  
Griffith University

## Contract Management Partners

Moreton Bay Regional Council  
Southern Downs Regional Council  
Brisbane City Council

There are many others, including staff who have contributed their time, talent and generosity to our services. We are enormously grateful and thank you for all you do to help Y Queensland and the communities we support.



# Changing lives since 1864

## Stay connected to Y Queensland



YMCAQueensland



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YMCAQueensland



YMCAQueensland

Check out What's Happening  
at Y Queensland

