

## Participant Leadership helps grow the Award

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- Mrs Naudé (Gilson College Award Leader)



Young Award Leaders (YALs) is a program run in Victoria where Participants work with their Award Leader to help sustain and grow an exciting Award program by supporting other Participants in their Journeys, and helping build a strong Duke of Ed community at their school. Acting as a YAL encourages Participants to develop valuable leadership skills that help them succeed in work and life. Hours spent doing YAL activities can be counted towards a Participants' Voluntary Service or Skill section. Last year Victoria saw tremendous success with the program as YALs helped Award Leaders transition their programs online and keep other Participants engaged, during the several months of lockdown. One YAL in particular, Kristi Garratt, went above and beyond in her capacity as a YAL, helping to double the amount of Participants signing up to the Award at her school. In recognition of this, we are celebrating Kristi's efforts by sharing an interview with her about her experience of being a YAL and the achievements she made.



### **What made you decide to become a YAL?**

As I never had a peer group mentor to guide me while in the early stages of my DOE journey, the Young Award Leader program was the perfect opportunity to become that mentor for the next generation of Award participants in my school. With respect to the various personal benefits experienced as a result of the Award, (such as greater levels of confidence, increased spontaneity and improved time management), I felt compelled to share the Award with my peers. In addition to this, the YAL program enabled me to complete the voluntary service aspect of my Gold Award despite the extensive lockdowns experienced in Victoria due to COVID-19.

### **What are some of the main activities you conducted as part of being a YAL?**

As I began the program during the lockdown of 2020, I utilised the time to develop my own leadership skills through reading multiple leadership development books. As part of promoting the Award to students at my school, I created multiple informative social media posts that highlighted the experiences of other participants who completed the Award at my school. As we slowly transitioned back to face-to-face learning, I had an opportunity to conduct informal Q&A sessions with different year levels during their combined homeroom sessions and during



our Secondary school gathering. My favourite activity during the YAL program was meeting with new participants and helping them establish their goals for the Award.

### Examples of Social Media Posts made by Kristi

**Start Your Award Today and Become: World Ready**  
 INTRODUCING THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

**WHAT IS THE AWARD?**

- The world's leading achievement award for young people, bringing together practical experiences and life skills to create committed global citizens and equipping young people for life.

**WHY YOU SHOULD DO THE AWARD**

- Completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award has many benefits. You'll learn a variety of life skills as you face challenges and overcome barriers.
- Allows participants to make a difference in their community and receive higher, practical educational aid and employment opportunities.

To speak to someone within Gilson College for more information, contact:

**Gilson College Award Leader**  
 admin.th@gilson.vic.edu  
 9365 9365

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: [HTTPS://DUKEOFED.COM.AU/](https://dukeofed.com.au/)**

**Student Experience**  
 AMELIA, YEAR 12

"The Bronze Duke of Edinburgh has given me the opportunity to grow in multiple areas of life, but most importantly it has allowed me to develop my confidence. The framework of this award encourages me to step out of my comfort zone and do things that challenge both my mental and physical abilities. The best part of doing this award for me would have to be the service and adventurous journey as these both provided me with amazing leadership opportunities and the chance to get to know many incredible people along the way."

*Amelia preparing for and undertaking her Bronze Adventurous Journey with friends*

### Example of a poster made by Kristi

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**PHYSICAL RECREATION**      **SERVICE**      **SKILL**      **ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY**

To speak to someone within Gilson College for more information, contact:

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### **What part of being a YAL did you enjoy the most?**

My favourite part of being a YAL was having the opportunity to share with each cohort within my school and see how many students showed such eagerness in doing their Award, especially how friend groups would plan their Award and adventurous journey together and how the experience would be collaborative yet individual to each participant.

Another area I enjoyed was having the opportunity to meet with the other Young Award Leaders in Victoria online, at the beginning of the program and sharing our goals and ambitions for our role and how they would play out into our schools and communities.



### **Did you see any positive outcomes as a result of your YAL activities (either in the ways in which you helped your Award Leader by taking away some of their burden or work load, or increased interest in the Award within your school)?**

As a result of completing the YAL program, within Gilson College, over 14+ students have signed up to start their Bronze Awards. This is double what would usually sign up per year at our school and it was great to see how many students were inspired as a result of simply hearing someone encourage them to take ownership and action of their learning.

My Award Leader is also very appreciative of the support I have shown to new participants in setting up their Awards and lightening her burden to help each individual with the process.



## Example of the letter to Gilson Students written by Kristi

Dear Student,

My name is Kristi Garratt, and I am currently the Year 12 Vicei Captain and Young Award Leader for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award at Gilson College.

I am currently in the process of completing the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, at the Gold Level. I have found that my Award journey over the past 3 years has been instrumental in helping me become the young person that I am today. Thus, my intention is to encourage other students at Gilson College to participate in the Award, that they might experience similar benefits.

As background information, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is the world's leading achievement award for young people, and is highly regarded by Universities, Schools, and Employers. It encourages young people to develop independence, commitment, leadership and teamwork through being involved in a personalised program of activities.

The Award's leading youth development program empowers all young people to explore their full potential, regardless of their location or circumstance. Every young person aged 14i 25 who takes part learns a life skill, improves their physical wellbeing, volunteers in their community and experiences a team adventure in a new environment.

Through this challenging journey of selfi discovery, participants are equipped and empowered to achieve their personal best, to take ownership of their goals and life choices as well as become actively engaged within the community and workforce.

I believe this is an excellent opportunity for students of Gilson College Secondary. They will be required to volunteer their time, take part in physical activity and learn a skill as well as taking part in both a practice and qualifying overnight camping expedition. As this is not a 'taught' award, the students need to be motivated – but as a school, we will train and support them for their expedition.

To find out more about the award, head to <https://dukeofed.com.au/>

## Benefits of the Award

Alongside personal development, self-discovery and the learning of important life skills, the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award includes other tangible benefits such as the following:



## Award Framework

The Award has three basic levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each of these levels are open to different ages, as outlined in the graphic below. Typically, students commence the Award in Year 9, at the Bronze Level. Students may then participate in the Silver Level in Year 10, and finally, the Gold Level in Years 11 and 12.

Students can begin this Award after Year 9, however it is recommended to begin in Year 9, as Gilson College's Year 9 Learning 4 Life program has been tailored to specialise in the aspects targeted by the Award, and the completion of the Year 9 program can then contribute to meeting the Award requirements.

	Service	Physical Recreation	Skill	Adventurous Journey	Residential Project
	To develop and encourage a sense of community spirit and responsibility to others	To encourage participation in physical recreation and improvement in physical fitness and performance	To encourage the development of personal interests and practical skills	To encourage a spirit of adventure and discovery	To broaden experience through involvement with others in a residential setting
<b>Bronze</b> 14yrs +	3 months	3 months	3 months	2 days / 1 night (1 x Practice Journey and 1 x Qualifying Journey)	N/A (Gold level only)
Averaging at least 1 hour per week. Plus an additional 3 months for either Service, Skill or Physical Recreation					
<b>Silver</b> 15yrs +	6 months	6 months	6 months	3 days / 2 nights (1 x Practice Journey and 1 x Qualifying Journey)	N/A (Gold level only)
Averaging at least 1 hour per week. Plus an additional 6 months for either Service, Skill or Physical Recreation					
<b>Gold</b> 16yrs +	12 months	12 months	12 months	4 days / 3 nights (1 x Practice Journey and 1 x Qualifying Journey)	5 days / 4 nights
Averaging at least 1 hour per week. Plus an additional 6 months for either Service, Skill or Physical Recreation					



Students who commence the Award are not required to participate in all three levels, however, I highly recommend that students consider participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, to whichever level they desire.

For more information, or to sign up to participate in the Award:

- Head to <https://dukeofed.com.au/> for the answers to frequently asked questions, or further details on each aspect of the Award.

I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and I hope you will seriously consider participating in this exciting Award.

With gratitude,

Kristi

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Indeed Kristi's Award Leader was very grateful and appreciative of Kristi's work. Read below for the full quote, taken from her assessor report for her Voluntary Service Section

"In her capacity as Young Award Leader, Kristi Garratt has been an excellent ambassador for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Program. As she has done in every aspect of her DOE Award completion, she has demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities, including initiative, diligence, admirable communication skills, and creativity. She has conducted thorough research to ensure that she represents the award in the best possible way, created informative and inviting publicity materials (which she also arranged to have published through various school channels), used various speaking opportunities to address groups of students about the award, and assisted and guided various students as they embarked on their Duke of Edinburgh Award journeys. I am very grateful to Kristi for all her wonderful work in promoting the award. As a result of her efforts, we have seen the interest in DOE Award participation increase quite significantly at our school".

Mrs Naudé (Gilson College Award Leader)