

# Youth as Facilitative Leaders

John Oyler, August 13, 2019

During the 1999 ITopTot, Megan Klein and I came up with the term "Youth as Facilitative Leaders" (YFL) and a rough plan for launching the program with youth-adult teams involved in Community Youth Development (CYD) around the country. Over the next year, first drafts of participant and instructor manuals were created and interest gleaned from colleagues in the CYD movement.

Through 2005 over 3,000 youth and adults graduated from courses around the country, with emphases on Arizona and the East Coast. The 33 full-time ICA staff/interns/international volunteers listed on the attached page all helped with the YFL program either occasionally or full-time. They designed various versions of the manual and different exercises to accompany it. We asked \$1000 for a team of up to eight, averaging about three teams per course. We seldom received that much, but that was okay, because the mission was to get the methods out as far and wide as possible. Facilitation teams were made up of a mentor trainer, a young trainer (with experience teaching) and a newby volunteer (often from a previous course)

Diego participated in the 2001 ITopTot along with 4 other Americans, as it was specially designed around YFL. For the next few years while working with the YMCA, he was part of a San Diego team which I teamed up with to teach 6-8 courses in that area, often recruited by the Y or San Diego Youth and Community Service, one of the original initiators of the CYD movement.

Towards the end of this five-year period, it became clear that ICA was not going to invest in this program longterm, so we shifted strategy to finding a handful of organizations with whom to partner in the delivery of YFL. By this time, Diego had moved on to LA All Stars. He, Courtney and I taught several courses with their youth and staff. Excitement was high and the process began to create an in-house faculty that would eventually take over the delivery of the training. We used the version of the manual that they liked best and which they printed. Unfortunately, not long into the process, leadership of the organization changed and things stalled. Diego subsequently moved on to the Bay Area.

After Diego settled in with ASAP-Connect, we began doing training primarily with young adults working with youth, providing T.A.f or after school programs, etc.. This program from the beginning was organized and owned by them, again with the intention of forming an in-house faculty to deliver the training. Whenever Courtney, Alisa or I are involved, we charge a small fee and travel expenses to support the program. Trainings have different titles and different exercises depending on the group.