



Media Release  
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### **High Demand for SA's First Girls High School Leadership Conference**

South Australia's first leadership conference for high school girls in years 10 to 12 has sold out within weeks of announcement.

YWCA of Adelaide's SHE Leads High Conference is a full day event designed to support and foster the leadership potential of secondary school girls and is designed to meet growing demand for leadership development opportunities for girls and young women.

YWCA of Adelaide Chief Executive Liz Forsyth says while girls in general are performing well at school and entering university at increasingly higher rates, they still face persistent barriers upon entering the workforce and advancing to senior leadership across business, politics and within the community.

*"The highest gender pay gap recorded in Australia is the most recent indicator that we have systems and structures still to challenge and re-shape if we as a society are serious about achieving true gender equality in this country. YWCA not only works to achieve these changes, but we also invest in the people who will play a part in leading that change in coming generations,"* said Ms Forsyth.

YWCA's 2014 national She Speaks survey of more than 1600 girls and young women aged 15-30 revealed that 71% want to be leaders in the future. While 58% of those surveyed already consider themselves to be a leader in their family, school, community and/or workplace, only 23% said they see effective leadership in public life.

YWCA She Speaks survey respondents identified the need to change workplace structures to support more women in to leadership in workplaces, as well as the need for visible female role models as high priorities.

*"This evidence provides us with the information we need to ensure we are delivering to our community exactly what it tells us it wants,"* said Ms Forsyth.

*"Our inaugural SHE Leads High Conference will be a turning point for this state regarding making an early investment in the leadership of a new generation of female leaders."*

YWCA of Adelaide's SHE Leads High conference is being held on Friday 8 May 2015 at the Stamford Plaza from 9am-4:30pm.

Participating schools include Wiltja, Le Fevre, Fremont, Burra, Port Pirie, Victor Harbor, Christies Beach, Findon, Modbury, Parafield Gardens, Paralowie, Salisbury East and Blackwood.

Following the SHE Leads High Conference, YWCA of Adelaide is piloting an in-school leadership program for girls in years 10-12 focussing on leadership styles, working with teams and strategies to be involved in their community.

YWCA of Adelaide has developed SHE Leads High alongside its highly successful SHE Leads Conference for early career young women which will enter its fourth year in 2015. Held on Friday 21 August at the National Wine Centre, the SHE Leads Conference attracts more than 200 young women for a full day of inspiration, debate and discussion about progressing women's leadership.

YWCA of Adelaide also provides the SHE Leads Program – a ten month leadership development program for early career young women.

The organisation acknowledges sponsors which actively support women's leadership development through investing in YWCA's initiatives including SA Power Networks, SA Water, National Wine Centre, Soroptimist International and Zonta, Flinders University, Svitzer, and various local MPs.

For further information contact YWCA Adelaide Communications and Engagement Manager Chelsea Lewis 0425 286 064.