

YFC MONTHLY NEWS



OCTOBER 2026

YFC ENGAGES LOST TEENS IN
CHRIST-SHARING RELATIONSHIPS

LEGACY by Ed Kaczmarek, Executive Director:

Recently I have been thinking a lot about the concept of **Legacy**. There are people who have come through Sacramento YFC who have left a legacy - and many more who are currently building their legacy. **Pastor Ted Smith** passed away in August. Ted served as Executive Director of YFC in the 1970's, and he recruited Gary Fox as his replacement. Ted went on to dedicate his life as pastor of First Covenant Church -now known as River City Christian Church. He left a lasting regional legacy impacting thousands in Rancho Cordova and beyond.



Speaking of **Gary Fox**, he continues to excel at recruiting participation and managing our two annual golf tournaments - the Swing for Youth in June, and the Golf Challenge in September. We just completed the Golf Challenge, netting over \$100,000 for the ministry! I've enclosed an image displaying all of our great sponsors for that event. Gary continues to encourage and mentor our staff as he maintains great relationships cultivated over five decades of ministry - a legacy of relationship.



Of course we remember **Rob Maxey**, a fun loving, creative, ministry-first leader with limitless energy, who died too soon in our opinion, but left his legacy of ministry at YFC. Rob's work and passion resound throughout the chapter and is remembered with each youth night, prayer event, or ministry meeting at the Granite Bay Barn.



Dan Palmer is the leader who helped YFC not only survive, but THRIVE through Covid. Dan powered through those hard and crazy times (youth ministry without meeting in person??) leaving a legacy of growth and expansion of the chapter through it all. Dan is a gifted preacher with an entrepreneurial spirit, now residing in Texas with his family.

In the long history of YFC Sacramento there have been hundreds of staff who have impacted youth - some for a short time, others for a longer tenure. Currently on our team are many who are called and chosen for a lifetime and lifestyle of ministering to youth. Today there are 20 on our staff team, and 80 more who are approved volunteers... so it would take a lot of volumes to describe the legacies they are building. But this month, I'd like to take a closer look at the amazing work happening through Crossover Basketball under the guidance of **Coach Omar Turner**.

CROSSOVER BASKETBALL STILL SCORING POINTS: Under the visionary leadership of Coach Omar Turner, the Crossover Basketball program in Elk Grove and south Sacramento—part of Youth For Christ Sacramento—has become a powerful force for transformation, using the game of basketball as a bridge to build character, confidence, responsibility, and faith in young lives. For decades, Coach Omar has poured his heart into mentoring youth, teaching them that true success extends far beyond the court. Through the D.E.B.S. Way (Dedication, Education, Belief, and Service), players learn to cross over from adversity to purpose, developing the discipline and hope needed to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually. In Elk Grove and across the Sacramento



region, this program offers not just elite skill development and competitive play, but a caring community where every athlete is seen, challenged, and encouraged to become a leader who impacts their world for good—proving that when basketball meets mentorship and faith, young people discover they can achieve more than they ever imagined.

Coach Omar continues to raise program funds, recruit coaches and volunteers, and, of course, mentor thousands of kids. Crossover has expanded to partner with Light of the Valley Church in Elk Grove, utilizing facility space for tutoring, youth meetings, and even parking lot basketball.

Some specific needs in Crossover right now, over and above regular financial support:

- A Crossover-dedicated pickup truck for hauling equipment
- A storage container, or storage unit (looking for donated or very low-cost options)
- Funding for additional mentors, coaches, and part time staff
- Volunteers!



Recently, Coach Turner was named one of the 2026 Top 100 AAU/Grassroots Directors in Northern California by Silver Waves Media. The recognition honors the most impactful and dedicated boys' grassroots directors shaping youth basketball through player development, scouting, and program success. This accolade highlights Coach Omar's longstanding commitment to mentoring young athletes both on and off the court through his Crossover Basketball program. Congratulations Coach!

UPDATE ON CARLOS: Several people were touched by Carlos' story in last month's newsletter, so I have a brief update (read the full story in our September newsletter posted at yfpsacramento.org/story). To recap, he's a 15-year-old dad who got homesick BAD at summer camp, missing his 2-month-old baby and his girlfriend. Unfortunately, a fight broke out with his step father upon his arrival home. The police were called, and Carlos was taken to juvenile detention in Woodland. The update: He was released from detention; he is back in West Sacramento and has a court date coming up. Things are up in the air with regard to consequences of his fight. He has been coming around the Collings Teen Center since summer camp. He is trying to be a good father and boyfriend. He is trying to graduate early from high school and get a good job - it's in his nature to take responsibility for his baby and future wife. He had been involved with gangs in the past, and though he has a street reputation that he tries to uphold, he is no longer in a gang. He has been stabbed and shot at - obviously events no young person should have to face. As he says to Justin, his time at camp was *"Completely unexpected. I was blown away. Never in a million years could I have predicted that God would show up, show himself to me. I just went to have fun with friends, Justin bro I could never *%\$# guess in a million years that God would do something in my life, bro, my heart was changed!"*



Carlos continues in relationship with Justin, and Justin's son Eli. This story is a process - far from a happy ending, but we believe Carlos is on his way to a great testimony in Christ. **Please continue to pray for Carlos** - and hundreds, even thousands, like him.

NEW MINISTRY STARTUP: YFC Shasta County is a volunteer effort led by Joanna Lynch. No, we don't have a YFC chapter in the Redding area, but Joanna was determined to restart the program after a 10+ year hiatus. She singlehandedly pulled together over a dozen local leaders to discuss the possibilities. We are helping from afar, providing resources, training, and oversight. I visited with Joanna and we met with principals, former YFC staff, partner ministries, and church leaders. Please pray with me for this budding ministry opportunity!



STAFF DEPARTING: Brendan Hammer left our team at the end of September. He will now be Pastor of Student Ministries at Modesto Covenant Church - a church where he grew in his faith in the past. We'll miss Brendan but we wish him God's provision and guidance.



VOLUNTEER CORNER: Our **Volunteer Coordinator Gina Saraceni** continues to help potential volunteers complete the step-by-step process required to become a YFC volunteer. We have needs in ALL our locations: Collings Teen Center, Sayonara Center, Crossover Basketball, Placer County Campus Life, and even in the Auburn/Grass Valley areas. Contact Gina at gina@yfcSacramento.org or (916) 982-9748 for more information.



As always, together for our youth,



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YOUTH FOR CHRIST
SACRAMENTO

GOLF CHALLENGE

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