

## **Academia**

**From Ms Natalie Christopher founder of CYPRUS GIRLS CAN (CGC)** which operates on a volunteer basis.

Is a campaign which aims to encourage girls and women of all ages and abilities, including teens, through to women in their 50s from all across Cyprus to get more active and involved in sport. Women are under-represented in most sports in Cyprus; the sportswomen who are achieving receive little media coverage and remain unknown to most.

CGC wants to change that, while promoting a culture of peace on our island by giving women an opportunity to meet and socialise with people from across the divide. CGC encourages women and girls from all over Cyprus to become more active by offering - all free to attend -

Women's-only Open Days in different sports, Women's Health Weekends, Multi-sports one-day events in celebration of occasions such as International Women's Day (IWD) and the International Day of Sport for Peace and Development (IDSP), Visits to Schools and Youth Camps, Athlete (a female athlete from Cyprus) of the Month Interviews, Cyprus Girls Sports News: We share sportswomen in Cyprus 'achievements on our Facebook page and website, Sports Weekends/Camps, Public Seminars - Held in locations across the island and at the Home for Cooperation, a neutral space in the United

Nations controlled "buffer zone". With always qualified coach/instructor at all events who volunteers their time, expertise and equipment. Other volunteers also come to help hands-on at our events. They try to remove as many of the barriers that may stop women/girls attending a sports event as possible:

- Cost (all events are free to attend),
- Emphasising events are suitable for beginners/are non-competitive
- allowing women to bring their children along.

In the past year have hosted >35 Open Days in sports ranging from trail running, to rock climbing, to Dragon Boating. We always offer the opportunity to try the 'real' sport, rather than a "easy" version. The success of our Open Days at Breaking barriers encouraged, we to add new events (listed above). CGC visits Schools either side of the divide, as well as Youth Camps. We discuss sports role models, teach about the many benefits of sport: physical, mental and socially, as well as learning respect and inclusion. Every month we also interview a female athlete from Cyprus; we share their stories online, giving them the recognition they deserve. We show how they are 'normal' women-with families and jobs, thus acting as inspiration for other women. We also share sportswomen's news.

## **IOC**

The International Olympic Committee has developed educational and training programmes targeting women at mid- and senior-level positions.

The goals are to increase women's representation at the highest ranks of the Olympic Movement.

Leadership seminars and training:

Leadership seminars and training have been organised on all five continents since 2006. The objectives are to help women develop leadership skills, to build confidence and to encourage them to stand for elections for positions on boards within the Olympic Movement. The seminars also offer excellent opportunities for networking and sharing.

Specific objectives of the leadership training programmes:

- provide women, at mid- and senior-level positions, with empowerment, leadership and personal efficiency skills;
- encourage participants to proactively take up decision-making positions within their organisations;
- evaluate the situation of women in sport and define the way forward;
- strengthen the women in sport network and stimulate implementation of national and regional projects for women in sport;
- encourage women to take a more proactive role in advancing the cause of women in sport; and
- learn how to inspire and mentor other women and girls.

## **OLYMPIC MOVEMENT**

The opportunity we have in the Olympic Movement to inspire young girls to pursue athletics – and athletic greatness – and how we frame the discussion around gender equality in sport, is crucial. We have been having this discussion for a long time, but now is the time to take bigger and bolder steps forward in the race towards true gender equality in sport.

Sport is one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls. The IOC has an important responsibility to take action when it comes to gender equality – a basic human right of profound importance and a Fundamental Principle of the Olympic Charter.

Great progress has been made in promoting gender equality in terms of balancing the total number of athletes participating at the Games, offering leadership development, advocacy and awareness campaigns, and more recently appointing more women to leadership roles within the administration and governance.

Many Olympic Movement stakeholders have also implemented significant gender equality initiatives so that girls and women around the world are being given greater access and the opportunity to participate in sport. However, there are still many challenges to be addressed.