Midnight Basketball

Midnight Basketball is a national social inclusion program to help youth identify and embrace positive opportunities. Dinner, compulsory life-skills workshops and tournament basketball games are run in stadiums on either a Friday or Saturday night from 7.30pm till midnight, providing a safe and motivating environment.

The program has run internationally for over 20 years and in February 2006, Midnight Basketball Australia brought the successful model to Australia for a pilot tournament in the Redfern Waterloo area. Following a positive evaluation and strong support from the community, further tournaments were held and Midnight Basketball as an organisation was formed.

The first Campbelltown Midnight Basketball program was initiated and administered by Campbelltown City Council in February 2009. The event ran over a course of eight (8) weeks, every Friday night, and attracted over 70 young people, with some having to be placed on a waiting list as resources could not cater for such a large number.

The evaluation of the first Campbelltown program indicated that young people responded well to the experience, enjoying not only the basketball tournaments but also benefiting from the life-skills workshops and the healthy dinners that were made available each Friday night. The program will operate twice a year, every first and fourth quarter.

Each program is coordinated by the Tournament Manager and supported by various volunteer positions, included Team Managers, referees and workshop assistants.

Campbelltown City Council set up a Steering Committee for the Midnight Basketball program in August 2009 with UWS being a member of that Committee. Other members of the Committee include:

- Volunteering Macarthur
- Uniting Care Burnside
- Department of Sport and Recreation
- Commonwealth Banks Australia
- Lions Club of Campbelltown
- YMCA
- Macquarie Fields Local Area Command (Police).

UWS encourages and supports the Steering Committee in investigating avenues of making the program economically sustainable, especially in relation to the Tournament Manager’s role which is currently a paid position. UWS (through its Office of Engagement) is exploring opportunities for UWS student participation in a voluntary or intern capacity.

The next tournament is scheduled to run between 22 October 2010 and 10 December 2010.

For further information or to inquire about volunteer opportunities please contact the Office of Engagement at engagement@uws.edu.au

UWS students involved in the project