

Empowerment program aims to help youth Helping teens to stepUP

THE stepUP foundation aims to educate and excite teenagers about their futures with an empowerment program hosted in Geraldton-Greenough.

The purpose of the program is to enlighten students about the future possibilities available to them in business and life by bringing them together with inspirational leaders from all walks of life.

The event will be attended by six high-profile speakers from various backgrounds, including stepUp head coach Michael Sheargold, Cynthia Morton, Adam Thompson, Rowie McEvoy, Ryll Burgin and Kylie Forth.

The speakers will focus on emotional, entertainment and business success as well as achievement strategies and methods for overcoming obstacles.

The speakers have developed strategies, models and tools to coach students and engage them in activities and discussions on how to achieve success and face life's challenges.

More than 550 teenagers from 10 schools within the Mid West region will attend the event.

The two-day program will be held on September 9 and 10 at the Tip Top Basketball stadium.



Adam Thompson is most well known for his role as lead singer for Australian rock band Chocolate Starfish.

The band achieved Gold and Platinum album sales for their self-

titled debut, with the album going on to win an ARIA for Most Popular Album in 1994.

The album featured the number-one hit *You're So Vain* and top-five hit *Mountain*.

Adam earned two top-10 singles and

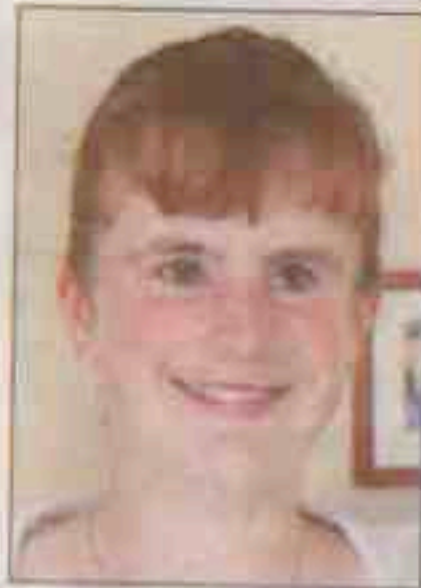
two top-five albums during his time as front man for the iconic Australian band.

Adam went on to release a solo album titled *Reconnected* after the disbanding of Chocolate Starfish and remains a highly-sought-after entertainer.

Adam has extended his expertise to explore different genres of music and new musical acts.

His repertoire includes a country and western take on pop hits, a cabaret show and a combination of rock classics and Chocolate Starfish hits.

Adam has created MusoMagic, a music program designed to engage groups of people from different backgrounds to make dreams a reality.



Kylie Forth suffered from cancer as a child, resulting in blindness and the loss of one of her legs because of an above-knee amputation.

Kylie moved from her home town of Kununoppin in the Wheatbelt to complete a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Anthropology and Linguistics at the University of Western Australia.

Not content with her already outstanding academic record, she has embarked on a law degree with the hope of specialising in human rights and equal opportunities law. She dreams of a non-prejudicial world in which everyone is equal.

Kylie discovered an enthusiasm for sailing, embarking on her first voyage on the Youth Training Ship *Leeuwin*.

After only two years experience, she was already a master sailor and won Gold in the 2006 International Blind Match-Racing Championships.

Kylie, 24, has since represented Australia in four International and World Blind Sailing championships.

She is ranked fourth in Blind Match-Racing and her dream is to compete in the Paralympics.

In her spare time, Kylie enjoys reading and thrill seeking.

From climbing the mast of the *Leeuwin* to abseiling, nothing is beyond her capability.

She loves the feeling of proving people wrong by accomplishing the seemingly impossible.



Ryll Burgin's business experience extends back to growing up in her own family's businesses and going on to complete a bachelor degree in business at university.

At just 24, with about \$1000 in the bank, Ryll launched her first business, Your Business

Partners, with the help of Nic Clark.

In a short period of time she had successfully grown the business to represent more than 400 clients, including well known brands Suncorp and OptusVision.

After selling the business, she moved to the US, where she worked for the next five years.

She is responsible for developing a knowl-

edge-based product called Businesses Getting Results, which provides accountants with marketing, management and business strategies to share with clients.

While in the US, she travelled between San Francisco, New York, Portland, Maine, Boston, Columbus, Ohio, Orlando and Florida for work.

In a long and distinguished career, Ryll's greatest accomplishment is the creation of the stepUP Foundation.

The non-profit organisation aims to educate and excite teenagers about the future possibilities for them in business and life.

More than 6000 teenagers have been involved in stepUP, 40 per cent of which come from underprivileged backgrounds.

Ryll has successfully expanded the stepUP foundation across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.