

our voice

spring 2013
greater harrisburg

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

- 01** race against racism
- 02** message from the CEO
- 03** girltalk youth summit
- 04** tribute to women of excellence
- 05** stand down
- 06** board news
- 07** racial justice @ the ywca
- 08** CEEED fashion show



Runners and walkers head out from the starting line on City Island.

race promotes unity, raises awareness

Blessed with gorgeous weather and excellent community participation, the YWCA Greater Harrisburg's 9th annual Race Against Racism was a great success! The race was held on April 27 at City Island.

About 800 people registered for the 5K run/walk, and the event grossed more than \$40,000.

The Race Against Racism raises significant funds to support the YWCA's racial justice programs, but it also promotes awareness of the issues that surround racial injustice in our community and provides resources to empower people to take

steps to counter racism. WGAL-8 co-anchor Jere Gish served as emcee. Kristal Turner-Childs, a Patrol Section Commander at the Pennsylvania State Police, led warm-up exercises prior to the race.

Entertainment included DJ Bill Runkle, Hip-Hop the Clown, the Bumbada Drummers, and the Reach! hip-hop dancers. The Harrisburg Senators and Target mascots also made appearances.

Congratulations to top male finisher Jason Gish and top female finisher Savanna Lenker, and the Target team, which won the coveted Team

Cup Challenge. A big thank you to Platinum Sponsors PSECU and WGAL-8; Gold Sponsors Penn State Harrisburg and Target; Silver Sponsors The Hershey Company, Messiah College, and UPMC for You; Bronze Sponsors Deloitte Consulting LLP, Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, Giant Food Stores, Sodexo, and UPS Foundation Inc.; and Community Sponsors The Bryn Mawr Trust Co., CBHNP, Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, K&L Gates, Members 1st Federal Credit Union, PAA, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, and Sutliff Chevrolet.

mission

The YWCA Greater Harrisburg is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

programs and services

- Child Development Programs**
- Housing & Homelessness Services**
- Violence Intervention & Prevention**
- Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Services**
- Legal & Visitation Services**
- Economic & Neighborhood Development Programs**
- Racial Justice**

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Kids on Campus 717.901.3637
Legal Center 717.724.0516
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www.ywcahbg.org

message from the CEO

We have had a busy few months at the YWCA, and as you read on, you will see more details about the wonderful events that have taken place here.

We had an excellent Black History Month celebration with several activities to raise awareness and connect with one another in a more meaningful way. The Tribute to Women of Excellence event was a great opportunity to honor women who are making a difference in our community. Our GirlTalk Youth Summit was powerful and educational, with phenomenal young speakers. Our Legislative Breakfast allowed us to advocate for the YWCA and educate our elected officials about the services we provide and how important these services are to their constituents.



Let's talk a little bit more about advocacy . . .

Advocacy...Any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.

In 1911, the YWCA initiated advocacy efforts by supporting a minimum-wage law for women. We continue to provide a strong voice for women, children and veterans in need.

We advocate for affordable child care for working families. We advocate for affordable, safe housing. We advocate to secure funding for individuals who have been impacted by domestic and sexual violence. We advocate for those who need to be heard but feel they have no voice.

We are their voice, and we continue to work hard to educate our elected officials about all the programs and services provided by the YWCA Greater Harrisburg and the direct impact we have on more than 22,000 individuals in our community each year.

As funding continues to decrease and the demands for our services continue to increase, we invite you to add your pen and your voice to our advocacy efforts. Write to your elected officials, or join our Advocacy and Public Policy Committee.

We rely on volunteers and community collaborations to help us provide comprehensive services. We know we can't do it alone, and with your help we can continue to make an impact in the lives of so many women, children and families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Nixon". It is written in a cursive, flowing style.

youth summit focuses on ‘peer power’

More than 100 girls gathered at Temple University Harrisburg on March 22 to take part in the 3rd annual GirlTalk Youth Summit.

Student committee members from the Harrisburg School District's John Harris and SciTech campuses selected the three workshop topics, and YWCA and school district staff facilitated the one-day conference with the theme of "Peer Power."

Inspirational female speakers Phebe West and Darragh Friedman spoke about harnessing peer pressure to impact self-esteem in a positive way and



Harrisburg School District Superintendent Dr. Sybil Knight-Burney (third from right) joins student committee members from the district's John Harris and SciTech campuses during the 3rd annual GirlTalk Youth Summit.

how to deconstruct the ubiquitous, stereotyped images of teen girls found in mass media.

Speaker Meghan Farrell encouraged the girls to be "up-standers."

The girls left the event equipped with the tools to dream beyond their circumstances and achieve those goals.

Looking forward, the YWCA and the summit participants would like to see GirlTalk grow into an after-school program, with the youth summit as the culmination of that experience.

YWCA representatives advocate for program funding

On April 9, representatives from seven YWCAs throughout Pennsylvania convened at the State Capitol for the fifth year to engage our elected officials in conversations on the importance of funding for domestic violence services and early childhood education.

Pennsylvania associations collectively met with 26 of our elected state representatives and senators, the majority of whom were receptive and responsive to the specific needs and concerns of the YWCA.

Rep. Sheryl Delozier (R-Lower Allen Township) and Rep. Patty Kim (D-Dauphin) addressed the group and offered valuable advocacy tips.

Diane Moyer, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape's Legal Director, urged legislators to increase the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding cap. The VOCA, signed into law in 1984 by President Ronald Reagan, created the VOCA Fund to be a protected and

dedicated source of funding for crime victim programs across the nation.

Diane Barber, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Child Care Association, called attention to the real impact achieved through early childhood education.

Affordable child care for working parents is critical in propelling families out of the cycle of poverty. Many parents have seen their child care copays increase by up to 100 percent and, in some cases, are unable to continue working because they cannot afford child care.

Research has shown that children enrolled in preschool programs – at a cost of approximately \$9,000 per year – graduate high school at higher rates, are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, maintain higher-paying jobs, and do not fall into the criminal justice system – a return on investment of \$90,000 per child.

The YWCA recognizes the importance of a robust, enriching environment for children, and our legislators should also safeguard this opportunity for their youngest constituents.

YWCAs across the state understand the importance of making strong connections with our legislators and extending awareness of the value the YWCA brings to the community.

As a national organization, we are a stellar steward of funds, with 83 percent of expenses spent on direct programming and services. We know that we are the last line of defense for many families who struggle to pay rent, afford child care, and put food on the table.

The YWCA will continue to provide a strong voice for women, children, families and veterans and will do its best to ensure that our legislators hear the message.

event honors 27 dynamic women

Twenty-seven dynamic women were honored during the YWCA Greater Harrisburg's 24th annual Tribute to Women of Excellence on March 20 at the Hershey Lodge.

This year's event was a great success, with more than 500 guests coming to honor the Women of Excellence. The event netted more than \$50,000 that will benefit YWCA programs.

Keynote speaker Starr Fischer told guests about her family's journey from homelessness to self-sufficiency in three months with the help of the YWCA and its Center for Education, Employment and Entrepreneurial Development.

ABC27 co-anchor/reporter Alicia Richards served as mistress of ceremonies during the Class of 2013 awards presentation.

Louise Reily Kunkel received the Legacy Award, which is given each year to an exemplary woman whose efforts set a standard for a lifetime commitment to the welfare of the Capital Region and its residents.

Phebe J. West received the Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes the efforts of women under the age of 30 on behalf of the community, particularly with regard to mentoring younger girls.

The other 2013 Women of Excellence are Marisol Aviles de Ortiz, Estamos Unidos de Pennsylvania; Alison Ballantine, Community Volunteer; Cate Barron, PA Media Group; Elizabeth Y. Bates, Penn State University School of Nursing; Marilyn L. Bowers, Performance Construction Services, Inc.; Cheryl Dellasega, Ph.D., Penn State College of Medicine; Jennifer J. Doyle, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities; Susan Eveland, Giant Food Stores, LLC; Amy C. Foerster, Esq., Bucknell University; Jennifer K. Gallia, Esq., Hershey Entertainment and Resorts; Peggy A. Grove, Rosewein Realty; Amy Hahn, The Hershey Company; Kristen L. Houser, Pennsylvania



Photo courtesy of www.paulvphotography.com

The Tribute to Women of Excellence Class of 2013.

Coalition Against Rape; Kandise Kerwin Hull, Esq., McNees Wallace & Nurick, LLC; Lecia Stanley Jordan, St. Stephen's Episcopal School; Dolly M. Lalvani, PricewaterhouseCoopers; Angela Liddle, Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance; Victoria S. Madden, Esq., Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole; Una Martone, Leadership Harrisburg Area; Sheri Matter, PinnacleHealth System; Sandra Neydl, Capital BlueCross; Cynthia Reinhart, Penn National Insurance; Lori Clark Robinson, Highmark Blue Shield; Alicelyn Watson Sleber, Sleber Associates, PC; and Jessica Sprajcar, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Thank you to Signature Sponsor Highmark Blue Shield; Visionary Sponsors Boyer and Ritter, Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Petroleum Products Corporation and The Hershey Company; Leader Sponsors Capital BlueCross, Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, Giant Food Stores, Penn National Insurance, and PinnacleHealth; and Advocate Sponsors Fulton Bank, Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, McNees Wallace & Nurick, Penn State Harrisburg Diversity and Educational Equity Commission & The Commission for Women, PSAV Presentation Services, Rosewein Realty Inc., Saul Ewing, Susquehanna Bank, Susquehanna Consulting and UPMC for You. A special thank you to our media sponsor Harrisburg Magazine.

stand down 2013

providing service to those who served

It was a brisk Saturday morning on February 23 as the line of cars, trucks and vans passed the PA National Guard sentry and approached Building #2 at the Harrisburg Military Post on Calder Street.

It was the beginning of the second and busiest day of the three-day 7th Annual Harrisburg Homeless Veterans Stand Down, which was attended by 53 homeless veterans.

The Stand Down, which is named for a military term for service members moving from the danger of the "front" to an area

where they can rest and refocus in safety, has become a traditional venue to provide local homeless veterans with the services they need to remain healthy, find employment and seek other needed services.

The YWCA Greater Harrisburg has been the facilitator and coordinator of the Harrisburg Stand Down since its rebirth in 2006.

Bill Reed, YWCA Director of Veterans' Services, said: "The Stand Down started in 2006 with support from Lower Allen VFW Post 7530. That year we had a few dozen homeless veterans from Harrisburg attending, representatives from the VA, and approximately 30-plus volunteers. Now it is a regional event that connects homeless veterans with services across six counties."

"The event offers a unique opportunity to provide homeless veterans with undivided attention for three days," said Barry Cannon, a seasoned YWCA VETS program representative attending his third Stand Down. "The Stand Down really shows the veterans and community what we – the YWCA and other veterans service providers – are all about and what services we offer."

"(The Stand Down) offers a unique opportunity to provide homeless veterans with undivided attention for three days."

- Barry Cannon, YWCA VETS program representative

At the Stand Down, homeless veterans were provided with far-ranging services, including medical, mental health, counseling, housing and enrollment services from the Lebanon VA Medical Center; free dental services from Onsite Health's mobile examination vehicle; disability claims assistance from the Disabled American Veterans; legal services from members of the PA Bar Association; traumatic brain injury support from the Disability Rights Network; and employment assistance from the YWCA VETS Employment Program and PA Career Link Veterans Employment staff.

"Self-esteem and a return to a sense of normalcy are critical components of the Stand Down, because homeless veterans often live in isolation and fear," Reed noted.

The Stand Down provides services to address these concerns and relies heavily upon volunteer organizations to bring these services together for the three-day event. Reed said many partners were critical to the success of this portion of the Stand Down, including Empire Beauty School, Blue Star Mothers, the American Red Cross, the American Legion, local chapters of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, a local church youth group, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The VFW District 18 provided thousands of dollars in donations to supplement and improve services for homeless veterans. VFW District 18 Commander David Gyger and District Homeless Veterans Representative Pat Marrow provided critical leadership in recruiting and organizing hundreds of VFW volunteers to help with logistics, food preparation, serving and cleanup services for the veterans and volunteers.

Following the Stand Down, a number of those who attended found employment, received housing assistance, and are working toward self-sufficiency and the promise of a life outside the shadows of homelessness.

"The Stand Down is where veterans connect with each other in ways they do not connect with others," Cannon said. "Veterans are a family."

The YWCA Greater Harrisburg respects the privacy of our donors and safeguards the confidentiality of all information related to your gifts. All monetary gifts are acknowledged with a letter that reflects the tax deductible portion of the donation. The official registration and financial information for YWCA Greater Harrisburg can be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Please consider making a general donation to the YWCA. Every dollar makes a difference! Questions? Please call Devan at 724-2248.

with a little help from our Friends

YWCA residents and their children had a great time at this year's Valentine's Day party, which was hosted by the Friends Board on February 14 in the Highmark Room.

Everyone enjoyed delicious food and desserts, and a photographer took each guest's picture. Many guests and YWCA staff members danced and sang karaoke to tunes played by DJ Daniel Boone.

Thank you to co-chairs Melissa Menke and Jean King for organizing such a delightful event!

The Cards with Heart campaign, formerly known as the Mother's Day Card campaign, kicked off on March 15 with a lovely artist's reception at City House Bed & Breakfast.

Camp Hill artist Julie Riker's oil painting "Red Tulips" is the featured art for this year's card. Cards are \$10 and all proceeds support the YWCA's emergency shelter.

The Cards with Heart committee is co-chaired by Kara Arnold and Amy Gambill. Cards are available for purchase at locations throughout the

Harrisburg area. Please visit www.ywcabg.org/cardswithheart for a list of sales locations, to purchase a card online, or for more information.

Save the date! The 2013 Power of Style Fashion Show is scheduled for October 10 at 11 a.m. at the West Shore Country Club. Michelle Piscioneri is chair of this year's event. For sponsorship opportunities, please call Devan at 724-2248.

junior board news

— Written by new Junior Board member Ashley Flower

There's no one reason why I became interested in joining the YWCA Greater Harrisburg's Junior Board. I had grown up in a family where the importance of service was instilled at an early age; attended a college where giving back was a clear focus of my sorority and the entire campus; and found an employer that appreciated volunteerism and encouraged its employees to give back to the communities it did business with in Central Pennsylvania and beyond.

Simply put, service has always been a part of me and my life.

Needless to say, I was thrilled when the opportunity to join the board was presented to me by Melissa Menke, a colleague and YWCA Friends Board member. As a young professional, relatively new to the Harrisburg area, I figured this would be the perfect way to meet young women with similar interests, learn more about the area,

and make a difference in the place I was now calling home.

At the Junior Board's February 26 meeting, I was welcomed as a new member along with Danielle L. Bowers, Jennifer CruverKibi, Samara Gomez, Gina Lauffer and Amber Mease.

I'm pleased to report that the Junior Board is off to a strong start, a sign of many great things yet to come from this talented group of young women. Planning for several of the Junior Board's key events, like the Spring Happy Hour and Fall Fest 2013, is under way.

On April 20, members of the Junior Board, along with their friends and family members, rolled up their sleeves and got to work cleaning up Camp Reily, the board's flagship endeavor. The group swept cabins, cleaned the lodge kitchen and common areas, scrubbed the restrooms, and completed a number of other tasks to get Camp Reily ready for campers this summer.

The Junior Board will host its 4th



Junior Board member Kelley Kauffman mops the floor of the lodge kitchen during the board's Camp Reily cleanup April 20.

annual Spring Happy Hour fundraiser on Thursday, June 20. Mark your calendars and plan to join us for food, drinks, music and a great raffle. Be on the lookout for more details, and if you are interested in donating an item to the raffle, please contact event chair Jade Herbst at jherbst13@gmail.com.

racial justice @ the YWCA

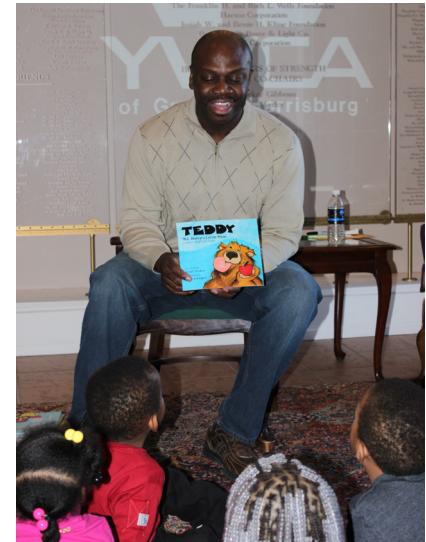
The YWCA's new Racial Justice Staff Advisory Council put together a fantastic program of events in February to celebrate Black History Month.

Read-In Day, February 14: Our first event focused on highlighting African-American authors with a read-in in the front lobby of the John Crain Kunkel Center. Local author and "Superreader" Floyd Stokes kicked off the morning with interactive readings of his books that were greatly enjoyed by children (and adults!) from the YWCA's Child Development Center.

Throughout the afternoon, YWCA staff took turns reading from selections by authors such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Frederick Douglass, Maya Angelou and Dorothy Height. It was powerful to hear the words of these leaders past and present through the voices of our staff, and it served as an encouragement as we strive to do our own work in advancing racial justice.

African-American Leaders Forum & Rhythmic Showcase, February 21: The signature event for the month brought more than 75 staff, clients and community members together to hear from our distinguished panelists and talented local artists.

The African-American Leaders Forum addressed issues important to our community and featured the



(Clockwise, from top left)
Snapshots from the African-American Leaders Forum, Read-In Day with "Superreader" Floyd Stokes, and the YWCA staff Soul Food Cook-Off.

following respected local leaders:

- Patricia Gadsden, Life Esteem founder and president – "Black History in Harrisburg"
- Yvonne Hollins, Boys & Girls Club CEO – "Education & Opportunities"
- Dr. Linnie Carter, HACC Vice President of College Advancement – "Education & Opportunities"
- Tina Nixon, YWCA CEO – "Violence in Our Community"

The forum was followed by a showcase of local talent, with poets and spoken-word artists sharing powerfully personal pieces that spoke to issues of empowerment and justice relevant to the month's theme. It was a very inspiring event and a wonderful opportunity to highlight the leaders and artists in our community who

have so much experience to share and vision to offer us as we move forward.

Soul Food Cook-Off, February 28:

To top off the month, the YWCA held its first Soul Food Cook-Off, with staff entering dishes in six categories and everyone coming together to enjoy the delicious feast and vote for their favorites. Jankail Adams, the staff advisory council member organizing this event, shared a brief history of "soul food," instilling an educational piece to complement the great food and fellowship.

For more information about Racial Justice @ the YWCA Greater Harrisburg, please contact our Racial Justice Development Specialist, Amanda Arbour, at AArbour@ywcahbg.org or 717-234-7931 x3057.

CEEED hosts a job fair with fashion flare



State Rep. Patty Kim, left, watches as Stephanie Lee models an outfit during the CEEED "First Impressions 2013 Job Fair with a Fashion Flare."

The Center for Employment, Education and Entrepreneurial Development (CEEED) held the "First Impressions 2013 Job Fair with a Fashion Flare" on January 31 in the YWCA's Highmark Room. The event highlighted employment and educational opportunities along with a fashion show featuring interview-appropriate attire.

Recent graduates of CEEED's Highmark Youth Initiative Program served as models for the fashion show. Representatives from Empire Beauty School provided hair styling, makeup and nail care for the models, who strutted down the runway sporting outfits provided by The Urban Snob, Julia Colbert Consulting, Top Shelf Menswear and The Men's Warehouse.

Prior to the fashion show, state Rep. Patty Kim (D-Dauphin)

presented the graduates with certificates of recognition for their efforts to obtain General Equivalency Diplomas.

Representatives from academic institutions and area employers – including the Hilton Harrisburg, Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, Country Meadows, Community Services Group, Hollywood Casino and Aerotek – were on hand to discuss employment and educational opportunities with the graduates.

Forty students ranging in age from 18-24 participated in the Highmark Youth Initiative Program and were awarded certificates in such areas as manufacturing training, OSHA certification, GED, nurse aide and forklift training. The students also received training in employment readiness and job placement.

upcoming events

Junior Board Happy Hour • June 20

Annual Meeting • September 24

Project Homeless Connect • September 25

Fourth Annual Fall Fest • October 5

Power of Style Fashion Show • October 10

Pursuit of Justice Purse Auction • December 5

visit www.ywcahbg.org for more information about upcoming events

local media attend round table

On April 23, as part of the YWCA's Sexual Assault Awareness Month activities, representatives from local media attended a round-table discussion with members of Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson's Sexual Violence Task Force, chaired by Tina Nixon, YWCA CEO.

The discussion served as a meaningful exchange on how to best report incidences of sexual assault. The panel was moderated by abc27 anchor

Valerie Pritchett.

Keeping in mind the rawness of the emotions and healing process of the victim, the panel discussed the importance of the using appropriate language and placing the blame firmly with the perpetrator, in addition to the delicate balance between reporting the violence of an assault versus including too many details.

Participants were also provided with a media tool kit.

YWCA Greater Harrisburg
1101 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17103



The YWCA Greater Harrisburg is a 501(c)3 organization, affiliated with the YWCA of the USA and is a United Way Agency. The YWCA is certified under the Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit Agencies' Standards of Excellence.

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