

our voice

fall 2012
greater harrisburg

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

resident reaps rewards of hard work

- 01 Marie Anne's story
- 02 Message from the CEO
- 03 Annual meeting
- 04 Job Fair
- 05 Board Updates
- 06 Kitchen School
- 07 Day of Caring
- 08 Family Movie Night

With a lot of faith, determination and hard work, Marie Anne has been making a new life for herself in the United States. And, after nearly six years of separation, she is on the verge of being reunited with three of her children.

A native of the Republic of Cameroon in Central Africa, the 55-year-old woman sought asylum in the United States in 2007, leaving behind her husband and nine children. She fled Cameroon because she feared for her safety due to her brother's involvement in a political opposition party.

After arriving in the U.S. and receiving a green card and work permit, she lived with acquaintances in West Virginia, Baltimore and Hummelstown. Her Hummelstown friend referred her to the YWCA, and in May 2010 Marie Anne began living in the YWCA's Transitional housing program. After two years in that program, she was transferred into the YWCA's Bridge housing program.

Marie Anne, whose native language is French, has learned to speak English by taking classes at the Center for Employment, Education and Entrepreneurial Development (CEEED) and watching English-language TV shows. She has attended weekly case management meetings and participated in the YW-Works employment program. She has also received help obtaining medical benefits and food stamps.

"People in America are very good," Marie Anne said. "You need help, they give it to you. They take care of you."

While working to improve her situation here, Marie Anne and her case manager, Joann Romain, have also been navigating the arduous and costly immigration process for three of Marie Anne's children.



Romain said they have relied on several area agencies, including Immigration Services and Ruth Circle, for assistance with completing the myriad immigration paperwork required by the Cameroon and U.S. embassies and translating her family members' birth certificates from French to English.

"It's been very, very hard," Romain said. "Oftentimes our case management meetings she would spend crying and trying to figure out what to do next."

Marie Anne has been working temp jobs, sometimes two at a time, to help pay her living expenses while also covering the various immigration costs, which include expensive DNA testing of herself and her children and airfare to fly them to the U.S.

"Money is what is going to bring the children here, and it costs a lot of money," Romain said, noting that Marie Anne has worked at temp jobs that offer higher pay and are of longer duration in order to keep the immigration

continued on p. 6

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

1101 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17103
Phone 717.234.7931 Fax 717.234.1779
Kids on Campus 717.901.3637
Legal Center 717.724.0516
24-hour hotline 800.654.1211

www.ywcahbg.org

message from the CEO

The YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism.

It is a critical part of our mission and a hallmark program – but what does that mean? How do we incorporate that in our daily operations and lives?

First of all, **we commit to engaging in conversations** about the realities of racism – conversations that may be uncomfortable. Staff tackled this issue head-on during the racial justice session at our staff in-service in October, when we examined how racism is imbedded in our society.

Our race informs who we are; our backgrounds and experiences are reflected in our color, culture, gender, language, jokes, clothes, food and society – race encompasses multiple facets of our identities.

Our staff recently had an opportunity to be introspective, to peel back a few layers of their identities and share key aspects of their backgrounds with their colleagues by writing “I Am From” poems.

This powerful exercise allowed us to know each other more deeply and to think about the aspects of our respective identities. I’d like to share mine:

I AM FROM

A place of humble beginnings

A place where no one thought twice about giving

A place where you thrived to survive or succumbed to the environment outside

A place of contradiction

A place with limited expectations

A place with many streets that only had two names

Success or Failure

I am from a place where we welcome do-overs

Addressing racism in ourselves and in our community is challenging, but essential work – and it must start with honestly examining ourselves and genuinely seeking to understand others. It is only then that we can truly work toward racial justice for all.



annual meeting highlights pivotal changes

YWCA CEO Tina Nixon outlined the YWCA’s new national direction, highlighted recent legislation, and honored YWCA clients, staff, volunteers and board members during the annual meeting Sept. 25 in the Highmark Room.

YWCA 2011-12 Association Board president Dr. Kim Phipps called the meeting to order, recognized new board members, and introduced 2012-13 Association Board President Mary Ann Claraval.

In her remarks, Nixon acknowledged the contributions and ongoing support of YWCA staff and board members, community leaders and volunteers, advocates and donors.

Nixon said that 2012 was marked by a significant change in the law to protect children from victimization by sexual predators. She also noted the passage of legislation that permits expert witness testimony in sexual assault trials.

Nixon said that the YWCA is at a pivotal point in its evolution. She discussed changes on the national and local levels, including a restructuring of leadership and some departments at the YWCA Greater Harrisburg.

During the meeting, the YWCA also recognized individuals and groups that have made a significant contribution and lasting impact on a YWCA program, client or group of clients.

Lisa Salvatore, from the Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania, accepted the Reily Award for contributions to children’s activities. Following a visit to the YWCA, Salvatore and two scouts decided to create a project to benefit the girls at the YWCA. With tremendous support from the Girl Scouts



YWCA CEO Tina Nixon, left, and Association Board President Mary Ann Claraval, center, listen as Michael Sullivan accepts the Carole Forker Gibbons Award on behalf of his late wife, Julie Sullivan.

in the Heart of Pennsylvania, a scout troop was formed at the YWCA.

The Ella Frazier Award for work toward the elimination of racism and the promotion of diversity was awarded to Deloitte Consulting. Five years ago, the firm reached out to the YWCA to initiate a sponsorship of the YWCA’s Race Against Racism.

The Sara-Alyce P. Wright Award was presented to Gabrielle Sedor, Communications Director

for Pennsylvania Advocacy and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities, for contributions to advocacy and public policy.

The President’s Award was presented to LeRoy Kline for contributions to a YWCA program, service or resource development. Kline, who is president of Delta Development Group, committed to finding a way to fund necessary repairs to the road at Camp Reily.

Kline’s efforts on the YWCA’s behalf resulted in Dauphin County funding of \$150,000 for improvements to the road and other camp facilities.

Michael Sullivan accepted the Carole Forker Gibbons Award on behalf of his late wife, Julie Sullivan, who lost her battle with cancer earlier this year. The award honors years of steadfast support of the YWCA.

Julie’s involvement with the YWCA dates back 10 years, with her serving consecutive terms on the Association Board and the Executive Committee. Most recently, Julie served as the Immediate Past President on the Friends Board.

thank you to the sponsors of the 2012 power of style fashion show

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domestic violence awareness month

While the YWCA Greater Harrisburg works year-round to increase awareness and prevent domestic violence, October's designation as Domestic Violence Awareness Month helps to focus national attention on this important issue.

Locally, the YWCA's "Paint the Town Purple" campaign was launched with the goal of raising awareness about domestic violence and encouraging community involvement via a series of events throughout October.

The campaign kicked off on Oct. 5 with community members joining YWCA staff members at the Kunkel Center and then walking downtown to "Paint the Town Purple" using purple ribbons, balloons and sidewalk chalk.

On Oct. 13, participants enjoyed purple drinks at Ceoltas Irish Pub, El Sol Mexican Restaurant and Mangia Qui, with proceeds from drink sales donated to the YWCA in support of domestic violence programs and services.



Carol Shank, YWCA Prevention Education Specialist, helps "Paint the Town Purple" by decorating the windows of Arepa City Latin Eatery.

Every Monday and Tuesday in October, Arooga's Grille House and Sports Bar donated 15% of proceeds from participating diners' meals to the YWCA in support of domestic violence programs and services.

The YWCA also teamed up with the Dressbarn in Mechanicsburg, which hosted a "Shop for the Cause" event on



Ann Shields, left, executive director of Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland and Perry counties, presents a Victim Advocacy Award to patrolman John P. Woodring during the First Responders Breakfast.

Oct. 21 that earmarked 10% of sales to support domestic violence programs.

Other Domestic Violence Awareness Month events included a breakfast honoring first responders on Oct. 5, the Power of Style Fashion Show on Oct. 11, and a YWCA open house on Oct. 23.

hundreds turn out for job fair

The YWCA Greater Harrisburg hosted a job fair on Aug. 15 that proved to be quite a success. More than 340 people turned out for the four-hour event held in the YWCA's Highmark Room.

The job fair was the result of two months of work by Supported Employment team leader, Tami Dunn, and her five-member team.

As the group began to organize the event, Dunn said she had discussions with her team members about which employers would be good matches for the clients that are served by the YWCA's Supported Employment Program.

"We realized that we wanted it to be a public job fair and offer support for our clients," Dunn said. "We have a

pretty diverse community around us. We just had to make sure we covered the diversity of being in the city."

She began cold calling 50-60 local companies with the goal of securing at least 15 that would offer competitive jobs with competitive wages.

Dunn exceeded her goal by securing 22 vendors, including 19 businesses and three academic institutions.

The 22 vendor tables were located around the perimeter of the Highmark Room, and attendees moved from table to table to meet with vendor representatives.

Job seekers sat at tables located in the center of the room and filled out employment applications.



A representative from Jacobson Staffing Company answers questions during the Aug. 15 Job Fair.

"All of the employers left with either job applications or interviews," Dunn said.

continued on p. 7

with a little help from our Friends

The Friends of the YWCA Board members are hard at work preparing for the upcoming holiday season.

The Power of Style Fashion Show, chaired by Madhavi Ravi, was held Oct. 11 at the West Shore Country Club. It was a sold-out event with a successful raffle and silent auction. The fashion show raised more than \$50,000 in

support of the YWCA's Violence Intervention and Prevention programs.

The next campaign led by the Friends Board will be the 2012 Holiday Giving Program, chaired by Michelle Piscioneri.

Women, children and men enrolled in YWCA programs or receiving services are matched with generous donors from

the community. Call 717-234-7931, ext. 3056, to sponsor an individual or family or to volunteer to assemble gifts in the YWCA's Highmark Room during the week of Dec. 17.

This year we welcome new Friends Board members Connie Foster and Elizabeth Mullaugh!

junior board news

On the first Saturday in October, more than 100 people joined the YWCA Greater Harrisburg's Junior Board for the 3rd annual Fall Fest at Camp Reily, the YWCA's 27-acre property north of Harrisburg that is used as the YW's summer camp location.

This year's festival fell on the perfect fall day. It was sunny, breezy, and with just the right amount of autumnal chill in the air. Partygoers enjoyed a fall-themed beer tasting, yummy food and Suzi Brown's acoustic performance that perfectly matched the tone of the event.

As the Junior Board's most successful fundraiser to date, Fall Fest '12 leaves us with a wonderful challenge: how best to use the proceeds to assist the YW? We're excited to be able to expand on our history of improvements to Camp Reily and assistance to the YW.

A huge thank you to our sponsors, who played quite a role in the success of the event: "Lodge" sponsor PinnacleHealth System; "Cabin" sponsors McNees Wallace & Nurick, LLC and Saul Ewing LLP; and "Tent" sponsors Androzzini & Associates and the Pennsylvania Automotive Association.

Thanks to our food sponsors Hudak & Company, KHB Insurance and Merry Maids, who helped contribute to the delicious BBQ spread. Thanks as well to Breski Beverages Distributor, which has supported us by donating beer for all three years of Fall Fest!

It is an exciting time for the Junior Board. We've settled into our committee structure, have seen continued success of our established events, and are excited to turn our enthusiasm and creativity to new goals for our organization.

The Junior Board seeks to promote awareness and support of the YWCA's mission with the assistance of young



More than 100 people enjoyed craft beers, good food and live music during the YWCA Junior Board's 3rd annual Fall Fest at Camp Reily on Oct. 6.

professional women in the Harrisburg community. If you would like more information about the Junior Board or are interested in joining, please contact Board President Lissa Richards at lissa.richards@gmail.com.

kitchen school serves up recipe for success

Congratulations to Suzanne and Miss Tea, residents of the YWCA's single-room occupancy program, for their successful completion of The Kitchen School.

Offered by Channels Food Rescue, The Kitchen School is a job-training program in food preparation and food service for low-income persons. The program is designed to prepare students for a sustaining career in the food-service industry and lead them to self-sufficiency.

Suzanne, who has been a YWCA resident for three years, and Miss Tea, a two-year resident, enrolled in the 14-week program in the spring. They attended classes six hours a day, five days a week.

The course is taught by Channels' Chef Instructor, Jackie P.; students who complete the course receive ServSafe Certification. ServSafe is a food safety training and certificate program administered by the National Restaurant Association.

During the course, Suzanne and



Suzanne, left, and Miss Tea hold their ServSafe certificates.

Miss Tea said they learned food prep skills such as use of knives, making sauces, braising, deep frying, making stocks, and proper food temperatures. The course also instructed them in life skills and employment procedures, and Channels staff members provided nutrition education.

Each Kitchen School student is required to spend the final two weeks of the course participating in an

internship. Miss Tea completed her internship at Channels, while Suzanne interned in the kitchen of the YWCA Child Development Center.

Suzanne's internship resulted in being hired as the center's cook in late June. She works 6 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday preparing breakfast, lunch and a snack each day for children enrolled at the Child Development Center. She also prepares a lunch each day for the YWCA's Kids on Campus daycare center in Enola.

"I'm glad I went (to The Kitchen School)," Suzanne said. "There's a lot of opportunity if you stick with it." In the future, Suzanne said she hopes to do her own catering.

Miss Tea said she would like to find food service employment in a restaurant, school or childcare center.

The women have received their ServSafe certificates and will be awarded a certificate of completion of The Kitchen School program during graduation ceremonies in December.

Marie Anne continued

process moving along.

"Marie is a very amazing woman, and her faith is very inspirational to me, because her faith is what has helped her get out of bed each morning," Romain said. "I couldn't imagine coming to a country and having to leave my entire family behind. You're talking almost six years that she hasn't seen her children."

Romain said Marie Anne stays connected with her family members through phone calls nearly every day and exchanging photos.

If all goes as planned, the children should be arriving in the U.S. by December. When they do arrive, Marie

Anne will have to move out of the YWCA. Romain said she hopes to work with Catholic Charities to find the family a place to live in the community, as she did recently for another client from Cameroon with similar circumstances.

Once her children arrive, Marie Anne's goals are to find a home and get certification to run a day care out of the home. Her long-term goal is to eventually have her entire family immigrate to the U.S.

"I'll never forget the YWCA, the good life I get from here," Marie Anne said. "I have everything from here . . . this place is No. 1. God is blessing me from here."

Romain said she has no doubt that Marie Anne will be successful once she

leaves the YWCA.

"I have enjoyed working with Marie Anne because she is one that you can give resources and then she follows up on them," Romain said. "She doesn't sit around and wait for me to tell her everything that she needs to do."

Romain added that Marie Anne's hard work should inspire her children, as well.

"It really teaches you that if you want things, you have to work for them, and it makes you appreciate them more," Romain said. "Her children will come here and they will appreciate the things that they can take advantage of here, because they know how hard their mom has worked to get them here."

day of caring 2012



Nearly 60 volunteers converged on the YWCA Greater Harrisburg's John Crain Kunkel Center and Kids on Campus for the United Way of the Capital Region's 20th annual Day of Caring on Sept. 7.

Volunteers from Rite Aid and PNC Bank spent the day working on a variety of projects throughout the Kunkel Center. Volunteers spruced up the landscaping outside of the building, removed trash on the grounds and pressure washed the building's exterior.

Inside, other groups brightened up walls in the YW Works computer lab

and the Supported Employment office with several coats of orange paint.

In Visitation Services, volunteers cleaned toys, shredded files and stained wooden chairs, and others disinfected toys, buggies and cubbies in the YWCA Child Development Center.

A group of volunteers from PNC prepared Angel Cards for a mailing to donors.

At Kids on Campus in Enola, a group from the Naval Support Activity Mechanicsburg transported mulch to the playground, cleaned hallway walls and painted the 2-year-olds' room.

job fair continued

Dunn said they observed an equal number of male and female attendees and a "good balance of different walks of life."

"There was a good mix of people with a great diversity," she said, adding that there were some attendees dressed in business suits and others dressed in jeans and sneakers.

Bill Reed, Director of Economic and Neighborhood Development for the YWCA, acknowledged that the Supported Employment team did a great job organizing a job fair of this scope.

"There were many opportunities for employment and many motivated and qualified job seekers that attended," he added.

Reed said that many job seekers shared that they had been given on-the-spot interviews or appointments for follow-up interviews.

"Employers praised the level of enthusiasm from members of the community and were eager to place individuals in jobs," Reed said. "Feedback from both the employers and job seekers was outstanding with a desire for a similar event in the near future. The job fair truly highlights the significant benefits of teamwork and a focus on meeting the needs of our community."

Dunn said plans for future job fairs include making it an all-day event and increasing the number of companies participating.

The YWCA Greater Harrisburg respects the privacy of our donors and safeguards the confidentiality of all information related to your gifts. If you would like your monetary contribution to be kept anonymous, please let us know. 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.

'bee' gets crowd buzzing

Approximately 50 people turned out to watch "Akeelah and the Bee" during the YWCA's Family Movie Night on Sept. 14.

The event was open to the community and sponsored by the YWCA's Racial Justice Program. The 2006 movie – starring Laurence Fishburne, Angela Bassett and Keke Palmer – was projected on a 16-foot inflatable screen set up in the parking lot outside the YWCA's John Crain Kunkel Center.

Attendees sprawled out on blankets or relaxed in lawn chairs as they watched the uplifting story of an 11-year-old girl who overcomes difficult circumstances and her own fears to pursue a dream of competing in the National Spelling Bee – which brings her community together in the process.

The MAD Sandwiches truck was parked nearby and sold goodies to the crowd.

"Akeelah is a character that everyone can relate to, and it was great to see both kids and adults get into the story – people were cheering by the end!" said Amanda Arbour, Racial



Justice Development Specialist. "I'm so happy that people came out to see this empowering story. It's a great reminder of what can happen when a community comes together."

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

upcoming events

Pursuit of Justice Purse Auction to benefit the YWCA Legal Center • Dec. 6th

Holiday Giving Program • Dec. 17th-21st

Tribute to Women of Excellence • March 20th

Race Against Racism • April 27th

YWCA Greater Harrisburg
1101 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17103



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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.