



our voice

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
greater harrisburg

message from the CEO

The winter months provide insight and inspiration for the mission of the YWCA Greater Harrisburg.

February was Black History Month, and March is Women's History Month. We are celebrating the achievements of some pioneering and courageous women, but there are so many other women, and notably women of color, who few know or celebrate.



There are notable African-American women whose names and accomplishments rarely come to light. In 1902, Charlotte Hawkins Brown founded the Palmer Institute for African-American students, which now houses a museum that explores the history of African-American women and education. Rose Morgan, owner of the largest and most visible African-American beauty salon in Harlem in the 1950s and 1960s, encouraged African-American women to celebrate their unique and striking features.



Closer to home, we celebrate Ella Frazier, the first African-American YWCA Executive Director, who served in that role for 21 years. We celebrate Jessica Butler-Grant, a champion of civil rights from a young age, who participated in the 1963 March on Washington with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and then served

as president of the Greater Harrisburg NAACP. At the national level, she has served for more than a decade on the NAACP's Board of Directors, and continues to be an outspoken advocate on issues of racial justice.

And we celebrate Dr. Alfreda Johnson, a pioneer for education in Harrisburg and the first female African-American secondary teacher in the Harrisburg School District. She moved on to higher education and worked for more than 30 years at Harrisburg Area Community College.

We celebrate all these women, and we endeavor to make those who went before us proud!

YWCA program helps widow find her way back

In early 2013, Lisa W.'s world fell apart. Her husband died following a lengthy illness, and she found herself with no home, no job and little support from her family.

A year later, Lisa has a new apartment, a new job and a new lease on life. [Click here](#) to read more about how the YWCA's Transitional Housing Program helped put her on the path to success.

racial justice @ the ywca

MLK Day of Service on Allison Hill

On Jan. 20, the YWCA Greater Harrisburg partnered with a coalition of local organizations for a special Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Allison Hill. Dr. King's dream was for a world of racial and economic justice rooted in peace; this vision resonates deeply with the YWCA's mission. This year, the YWCA chose to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King by joining together with other organizations on Allison Hill to serve our community.

These partner organizations included Brethren Community Ministries (bcmPEACE), Brethren Housing Association, Harrisburg Rain Barrel Coalition, Tri-County Community Action and Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Harrisburg Area.

More than 300 volunteers worked on projects throughout the neighborhood, and an educational program over the lunch hour featured words of reflection by the Rev. Nathaniel Gadsden, a presentation of "Drum Major" Awards for Service to Rev. Gadsden and to Bill Jamison, and a youth poetry presentation.



Local author and "Superreader" Floyd Stokes, with help from Isiah Green, reads his book "I Can Do It By Myself" to children from the YWCA's Grace M. Pollock Child Development Center.

At the YWCA, the Messiah College men's lacrosse team spent the day in the Grace M. Pollock Child Development Center stripping and priming all the Center's doors. Other community groups helped clean and reorganize the kitchen, sanitize toys in the classrooms and clean out the basement storage area.

YWCA Celebrates Black History Month

In February, the YWCA's Racial Justice Staff Advisory Council organized activities to celebrate Black History Month.

On Feb. 6, local author and "Superreader" Floyd Stokes kicked off the YWCA's Read-In Day by reading a selection of his books to children from the YWCA's Grace M. Pollock Child Development Center. Staff then took time to read selections from African-American authors. On Feb. 20, the YWCA staff participated in the 2nd Annual Soul Food Cook-Off, where staff members shared a variety of food items and learned about the origins of "soul food."

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

Winter shelter a respite for homeless women

It's been a cold, hard winter, particularly for those living on the streets. From Dec. 1 through Jan. 31, the YWCA's Winter Overnight Shelter served 50 women for a total of 121 bed nights, and those numbers will certainly increase as the frigid temperatures and winter storms continue.

[Click here](#) to read Housing and Homelessness Services Director Julia Hoskins' first-person account of her experiences with the women who make their way to the YWCA each evening seeking a warm, safe place to spend the night.



Race Against Racism celebrating 10th anniversary

The 10th annual Harrisburg Race Against Racism will be held Saturday, April 26 on City Island. The 5K walk/run promotes awareness of the issues that surround racial injustice in our community, and raises significant funds to support the YWCA's racial justice programs.

In celebration of the Race's 10th anniversary, a Humanity Fest will coincide with the race and will feature a variety of entertainment, activities for children, food trucks and vendor tables. A Kids Fun Run presented by The Hershey Company starts at 9 a.m., and the 5K race for runners and walkers starts at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, to register for the race, or reserve a vendor table, go to www.ywcahbg.org.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Events to mark Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The YWCA's Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Programs will mark Sexual Assault Awareness Month with a variety of events throughout April.

- On **April 5**, the YWCA will partner with Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries to present **Project A.W.E., a showcase of art and music exhibitions** honoring victims of sexual assault. The event will be from 2-5 p.m. in the YWCA's Highmark Room.
- A fundraiser will be held **April 10** from 5-9 p.m. at **Isaac's** in the West Shore Plaza. VIP staff will be on hand to distribute information about programs and services, and **25% of proceeds will benefit VIP programs**.
- Proceeds from an **April 11** Community Night at the **Harrisburg Senators** will benefit VIP programs. The game starts at 7 p.m. at Metro Bank Park, and VIP staff will be distributing program information at the ballpark. For tickets, visit senatorsbaseball.com.

▪ April 24 is **YWCA Denim Day** in Dauphin and Perry counties. The YWCA is asking community members, elected officials, businesses and students to wear jeans to protest against myths about sexual assault.

For more information about these events, contact jleedock@ywcahbg.org or mhavalchak@ywcahbg.org or go to www.ywcahbg.org.

yw snapshots



The Friends Board hosted a Valentine's Day party for YWCA residents on Feb. 24. About 70 women and children who reside at the YWCA enjoyed a fun evening of dinner, raffle prizes, dancing and karaoke, and kids' activities.



Members of the Trinity High School football team assemble cots at the 8th Annual Harrisburg Homeless Veterans Stand Down Feb. 28-March 2 at the PA Army National Guard Armory. More than 50 homeless veterans were served during the three-day event.



On Feb. 14, YWCA staff and children from the Grace M. Pollock Child Development Center participated in the world-wide 1 Billion Rising for Justice event that encourages people to rise up and demand an end to violence against women and girls.



Mechanicsburg artist Debra Kreiger's watercolor painting, "Bumblebee," is the artwork featured on the YWCA's 2014 Cards with Heart. This year's campaign will kick off on March 21 with an artist's reception at City House B&B. Proceeds from the \$10 cards benefit the YWCA's emergency shelter.

Upcoming Events

- Cards with Heart Kickoff Reception, March 21
- Tribute to Women of Excellence, March 25
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month - April
- Project A.W.E. Talent Showcase, April 5
- Pennsylvania YWCA Legislative Breakfast, April 9
- Isaac's Fundraiser, April 10
- Harrisburg Senators Community Night, April 11
- GirlTalk4 Youth Summit, April 14

- YWCA Denim Day, April 24
- Race Against Racism, April 26
- South Allison Hill Multicultural Festival, May 10



Celebrating 120 years of eliminating racism and empowering women!

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