

y's words

For friends, members and the Greater St. Paul community

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
St. Paul

Fall 2007

celebrating a century

Looking Back with Pride, Moving Forward with Hope

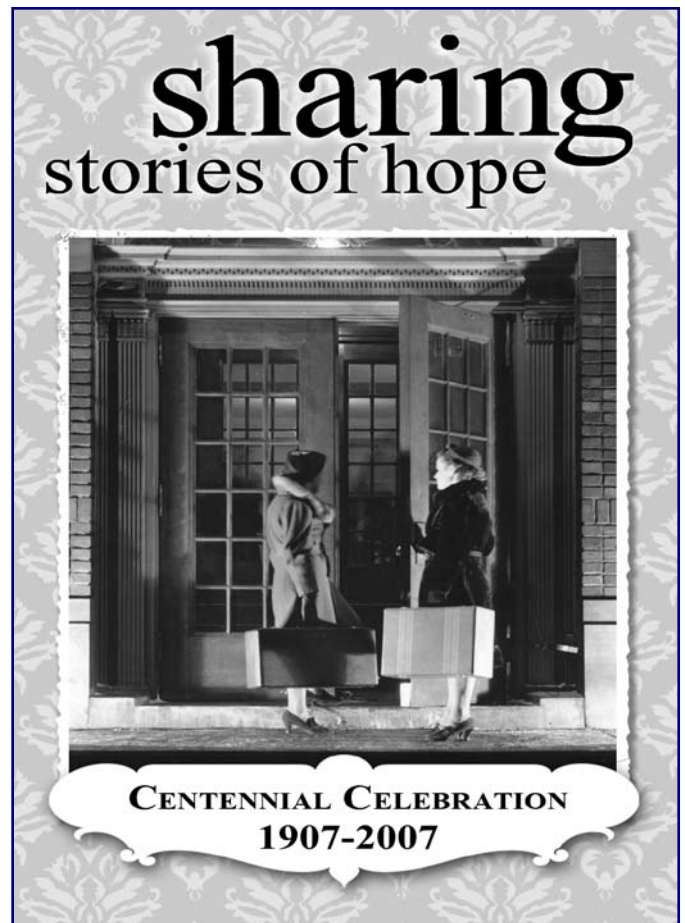
It's not everyday we have the opportunity to gather with friends, supporters and community leaders in celebration. In fact, it happens only once every 100 years! On September 27, 2007 the YWCA presents Sharing Stories of Hope, an evening celebration hosted at Travelers in St. Paul.

Today, Travelers is located on the site of the first YWCA St. Paul and the venue is a fitting homecoming for our Centennial Celebration. The evening will feature historic photos, memories from our past and moving testimonials. The celebration, which is emceed by WCCO's Angela Davis, will also honor the contributions of two extraordinary women, Betty Tiffany & Ruth Tanbara, and includes a keynote address by noted author, Sharon G. Flake.

A culmination of 100 years of memories, friendships and successes, our century of service will come alive as you learn of all the extraordinary ways the YWCA has provided for our participants, and the dedication with which we have continued to thrive through the decades. Please join us as we commemorate this incredible anniversary and stand with us as we commit to 100 more years!

Special Thanks to our Centennial Sponsors for making this chapter of our history possible: Gold Sponsor: Travelers; Silver Sponsor: 3M; Bronze Sponsors: Anchor Bank, Bremer Bank, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN, Ecolab, Insight News, Larson•King, LLP, Patricia A. Hvidston & Associates, U.S. Bank, Wellington Management; Media Sponsors: Insight News and Avenues.

For more information or to purchase tickets for the event, please contact Kelly Flynn (651) 222-3741.



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more than just a summer job

Teens Learn About the Working World and Draw a Paycheck

The nervous jitters of filling out a job application, the heart pounding anxiety of being interviewed for a position and the exhilarating thrill of getting a first job have been realities for IMPACT participants this summer. IMPACT has 10-15 new participants for its summer program. Add to that, the 20 who are already taking part in the work experience piece of the program, and that spells job success for nearly 40 young people.

Preparing IMPACT participants for employment is no small task. IMPACT staff members have created work readiness training that includes the essentials: developing interview skills, filling out applications, doing interest inventories, building interpersonal skills, improving phone etiquette, and conducting informational interviews. Job postings with detailed descriptions are on hand for students to review and determine what positions are a good match for them.

This summer, IMPACT participants are scattered around the agency and the city. Several students are working as Program Aides with

children in our Youth Achievers and Y's Kids Club programs. Other students are keeping the YWCA building and grounds spotless and manicured as part of the maintenance staff. Offsite work opportunities abound for other IMPACT students at the Rondo Library, the Transitional Housing Program's Child Care Center, the Greater Frogtown Community and Development Corporation and the Merrick Community Services. In addition, IMPACT participants are employed in the private sector at companies including Target, Minnesota Timberwolves, McDonald's, FedEx, Sears and more!

Typically when students join the program they are completely unaware of what life is like in the working world. For IMPACT Case Manager Leena Jacob, watching the students transition into young professionals has been a great experience. "I really enjoy helping these students become more accustomed to their responsibilities and roles within the job sites. Once they start their jobs they seem much more mature and focused," Jacob said.

To keep students motivated and address issues that arise, participants attend mandatory meetings on Wednesday afternoons. Professionals from the community frequently come in to discuss life skills and goal setting. IMPACT staff follow up with small group meetings where participants connect with peers and staff to discuss how their jobs are going. "It's a very important time for us to help coach and encourage the students in their struggles or accomplishments," Jacob said.

IMPACT participants wrap up these afternoons in their gender-specific groups, where they talk about issues like self-esteem, respect and empowerment. Through IMPACT, participants develop the skills and confidence needed to become lifelong learners, productive workers and responsible, self-sufficient citizens. Says Jacob, "I believe the impact these employment opportunities will have on our students is quite remarkable."

For more information on IMPACT, Please contact Michael Steward at (651) 222-3741.

supporting student success

Young People Learn and Grow Each Day at the YWCA



At the YWCA, you wouldn't be surprised to see young people in the pool, but would you expect to see them in a classroom?

While equipping and empowering families to grow and thrive, we pay special attention to supporting student achievement and helping

young people to learn. In fact, YWCA St. Paul supports student achievement year-round in a variety of ways.

Partnerships in the community bring homework assistance, literacy volunteers and opportunity. Our computer lab features state-of-the-art learning software. Close relationships with the school district and families mean YWCA staff can team with parents to help monitor academic growth.

During the school year, Y's Kids Club is designated as an Area Learning Center where children and families receive special assistance with reading, skill building and literacy. When school's out for the summer, learning doesn't stop. We also serve as an alternative summer school site for St. Paul Public Schools.

During the summer, youth spend a portion of each day focused on reading and math. Although they still have plenty of field trips and summer fun, the learning they do during the summer months helps position them for a

more successful school year and in some cases even allows them to advance to the next grade level in the fall.

Thanks to funding from Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota, I'm pleased to announce an exciting new opportunity to expand our services to include school readiness for children under six. This fall, our Transitional Housing Program will add a Children's Empowerment Media Center. The center will house a collection of materials, books, videos and toys to help mothers promote school readiness and help their children to develop early literacy and language skills.

Whether helping children prepare for kindergarten, providing support to help young readers or helping teens to meet their educational goals, it's a great time to learn at the YWCA.

lovin' the skin you're in

YWCA Hosts an Evening with Author Sharon G. Flake

Sometimes a good book leads you to love reading and sometimes it leads you to love yourself. For girls at the YWCA St. Paul and around the country, it all started with a book by author Sharon G. Flake. Her first novel, the *Skin I'm In*, chronicles the challenges and triumphs of Maleeka, a teen who's homemade clothes, good grades and dark skin make her a target of teasing and torment from her classmates.

The *Skin I'm In* earned Flake a Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent. Now mandatory reading at many middle schools, Flake's works have even inspired a movement! The Lovin' the Skin I'm In Movement, helps young people face the common yet painful issues of adolescence as experienced by African American youth.

Executive Producer of SoulTouch Productions and YWCA Board member, Robin Hickman created the movement and works with girls

throughout the Twin Cities and here at the YWCA. As part of the experience, girls have come to understand the importance of evaluating media messages, especially messages about stereotyping, body image, and violence.

They've also had the opportunity to explore career options in broadcasting and media. This fall, girls will visit WCCO television and interview Angela Davis. An accomplished broadcaster, Davis will help the girls develop an appreciation for what happens both behind the scenes and in front of the camera.

September is an especially exciting time for the girls in Lovin' the Skin. I'm In. In addition to their visit to WCCO, they will also be hosting an exhibit of their photojournalism work during an evening with author Sharon Flake! On September 26, the walls of the Western Conference Center will be transformed into the "Lovin' the Skin I'm In Gallery." YWCA



friends and supporters are invited to view the exhibit, meet Sharon Flake and find out more about Lovin' the Skin You're In.

Please join us in for an evening with Sharon Flake. Wednesday, September 26 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. For more information, contact Christina McCoy at (651) 222-3741.

uniting to end homelessness

Project Homeless Connect Provides Hope and Vital Services

What do 1,000 backpacks, 1,000 bus cards, 1,000 Target gift cards, 1,200 hot meals, 1,000 bag lunches, 75 sleeping bags, 8 bicycles, 226 volunteers and 74 service providers equal? Help for more than 1,081 homeless and impoverished individuals!

This June, as part of ongoing efforts to end homelessness in the Twin Cities, Ramsey County, the City of St. Paul and St. Paul Police Department united to host Project Homeless Connect. Partnering with service providers like YWCA St. Paul, local businesses, and area churches, Project Homeless Connect provided a one-stop shop of resources and agencies for those in need.

Case Managers for the YWCA's Family Intervention Program (FIP), Marcquilla Allen and Kristine Zimba, served on the event's steering committee. They helped ensure that the men, women, children and youth who came to the Armory had access to housing referrals and placements; employment services; education information; medical care, eye doctors and mental health care; benefits advice

and government information; haircuts, food and clothing; and legal assistance and veteran services.

"Homelessness goes beyond living on the street or in a shelter, many families are doubled up with whoever can take them in. It's very difficult for them to receive services or even know what services are out there for them. This event gave the YWCA and other community programs the opportunity to reach out to everyone experiencing homelessness and get them connected with the services they need," Zimba said.

For the second year, our Housing and Supportive Services staff was on hand to answer questions regarding Transitional Housing, Family Intervention, and Family Preservations programs. FIP connected with two families during this year's event and was able to place one family in housing during July. Applications for the Transitional Housing Program received at the event were reviewed and interviews were conducted in July. This year the agency's IMPACT Program and

Apprenticeship Opportunities Pilot Project debuted as youth services and employment services respectively.

For both Allen and Zimba, participating in Project Homeless Connect was a wonderfully rewarding and humbling experience. "Each person has a powerful story and you learn a lot about the resiliency people have to overcome their struggles and keep living each day. This is a great event if anyone wants to fully understand the scope of why people become homeless and why it is so difficult for them to get out of their situations," Zimba said.

Project Homeless Connect began in San Francisco in 2004 and has grown into a national best practice with great potential for getting people off the streets and into housing. With two years of success in Ramsey County and St. Paul, it's likely the wish of one participant to "keep having the project until no one else is homeless," will come true.

buy a book, give a book



Aug. 23, 9 am - 1 pm & 4 pm - 8 pm
Aug. 25, 8 am - 1 pm
Health and Fitness Center

YWCA is hosting a book sale! 50% of the total purchases will come back to kids at the YWCA in new books!

Each purchase that you make will help stock lending libraries for our Youth Development and Housing & Supportive Services programs.

Rather shop at home?

Visit: www.moreusbornebooks.com and click on the YWCA link!

cell phone drive

Your Junk Drawer Can Change Lives

There's a hidden do-gooder in your household and you probably would have never guessed it. Every month in the United States, over 10 million cell phones are retired to junk drawers. More than just clutter, used cell phones present an exciting opportunity to support programs and services for women, children and families.

This October, dust off your phones and join YWCA St. Paul's Community Cell Phone Drive. Donated phones, batteries and chargers will be recycled or repurposed to benefit women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

For your safety and privacy, all phones are tested to ensure service has been cancelled. Any phones found to have active accounts are immediately cancelled and the memory of all phones is automatically erased during reprogramming.

When you donate a phone you do something positive for the environment and make a real difference in the lives of women, children and families. Your junk drawer can make a difference!

Cell Phone Collection Sites

YWCA St. Paul
 375 Selby Avenue
 St. Paul, MN 55102

College of St. Catherine
 Info. Desk in Coeur de
 Catherine Building
 370 Couer de Catherine
 St. Paul, MN 55105

St. Paul Junior League
 633 Snelling Ave. North
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

Anchor Bank Locations
 (visit ywcaofstpaul.org
 for details)

For more information on the Community Cell Phone Drive, please contact Darcie Moore at (651) 265-0718 or dmoore@ywcaofstpaul.org

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This newsletter is a publication of the YWCA St. Paul. For more information on YWCA programs and services, please call 651-222-3741 or check out our web site at www.ywcaofstpaul.org.

This document is available in alternative formats.

The Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America is a women's membership movement nourished by its roots in the Christian faith and sustained by the richness of many beliefs and values. Strengthened by diversity, the Association draws together members who strive to create opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power in order to attain a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

The Young Women's Christian Association will thrust its collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists.



eliminating racism
 empowering women

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