

y's words

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

St. Paul

For friends, members and the Greater St. Paul community

Spring 2009

meeting the demand for shelter

New Partnership with Ramsey County Reaches Families in Need

As unemployment and foreclosure rates continue to climb — Ramsey County's emergency shelters are straining to keep up with the need. During the week of December 3, 2008 the County was unable to find emergency shelter for 44 families (184 children and 67 adults). To meet urgent community needs, Ramsey County approached YWCA St. Paul to participate in a Rapid Rehousing Project.

YWCA case managers worked with shelter staff to identify families who, with supportive services and a four-month rent subsidy, could maintain housing in the community. In less than 30 days, YWCA staff successfully transitioned 19 families out of the shelters and into housing!

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to help more families to combat homelessness," says Kristine Zimba, YWCA St. Paul's Family Support Services Manager. "And we're proud to have the staff and expertise to work so quickly to assist families in need."

Carol Zierman of Heading Home Ramsey credits the dedicated, creative leadership within the county for making Rapid Rehousing successful, and notes that the project wouldn't have been possible without the partnership with the YWCA St. Paul.

Rapid Rehousing is just one way the YWCA St. Paul helps families to fight homelessness. To learn more about the full range of Housing and Supportive Services at the YWCA St. Paul, please visit us online at ywcaofstpaul.org.



During December 2008, 19 families moved out of the emergency shelters and into housing with help from the YWCA St. Paul.

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snapshots from winter

A Glimpse at Programming and Happenings



Friends, members and neighbors came together to make the holidays bright for families in need during the 2008 Holiday Wrapping Party. To see more photos from an exceptional season of giving, please visit www.ywcaofstpaul.org/HolidayThanks.html.



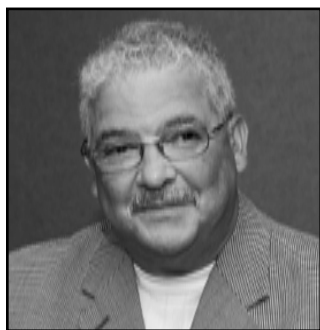
Girls learn etiquette during a November event sponsored by the AKA Sorority sisters.



Youth from the Youth Achievers Program and Leap Forward Collaborative had the opportunity to meet with their legislators and participate in Youth Day at the Capitol.

focused on families

Uncertain Economic Times Bring Challenges and Opportunities



Executive Director,
William L. Collins, Jr.

2008 was a year of many firsts for the YWCA St. Paul. We launched Supplemental Education Services (SES), the Youth in Motion Project, school-based programming for our Youth Achievers Program, and continued the exciting new partnership with the American Oromo Community of Minnesota.

The uncertain economy brought both challenges and opportunities — although enrollment

declined in our licensed child care program, the need for emergency shelter and housing continued to climb. As we celebrated opening new doors with the Rapid Rehousing project and the acquisition of a new building to provide housing for eligible families in Highland Park, we also prepared to close another door.

This March, we will close Y's Kids Club — our licensed child care program for children ages 5-12. Although we are proud of the excep-

tional service YKC has provided for more than 17 years, declining enrollment and the program's operational deficit required that we redirect our efforts and resources.

Although this has been a difficult decision, it is a decision that will strengthen our ability to weather challenging economic times and meet urgent community needs. As we speak of community needs, I would like to extend our thanks to all the individuals, groups and organizations who gave so generously during the holiday season.

Your gifts, well wishes and donations truly made the holidays a happier time for families enrolled in social service programs at the YWCA St. Paul. It was a reminder that even during trying times, we are part of a community that cares — a community that is dedicated to helping families to achieve success.

With an eye to the future and a focus on the needs of families, we thank you for your continued support.

yesterday, today, tomorrow

Celebrating Black History Month, Building Community

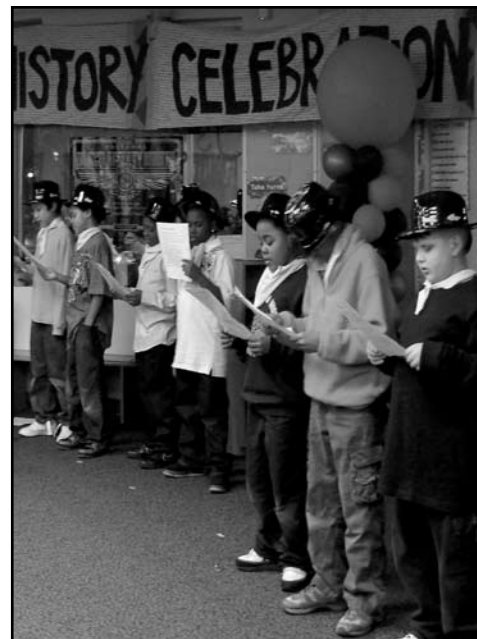
On Tuesday, February 24, YWCA St. Paul's Youth Development programs hosted a Black History Month Celebration and dinner attended by more than 95 people. Cumulating weeks of learning and planning, youth brought history to life through dance, drumming, dramatic readings and video presentations.

"Family Nights, like this one, are an important part of our programming and give our youth an opportunity to shine," said Jocelyn Wiedow, Youth Achievers Program Manager. "Every young person played a role in the evening," she said. "It's great to see our families coming together to encourage and support our youth."

Interested in volunteering at an upcoming family night? Please contact Christina McCoy at (651) 222-3741.



Girls performing a traditional African dance.



Boys performing a tribute to the Buffalo Soldiers.

piranhas celebrate strong season

Swimmers compete at State and Advance to Regionals

The 75 swimmers on the YWCA St. Paul's Piranhas Swim Team have much to celebrate this season. Countless hours of practice, competitions, dryland training and even fundraising helped make this season one of the team's best ever.

In addition to the many swimmers who achieved their personal bests, the team was proud to have 28 swimmers qualify for State. As a team, the Piranhas secured over 40 "Top Ten" spots and placed ninth overall.

"The team has made steady gains in both the number of swimmers and accomplishments," said Piranha's Coach Andrea Gleason. "Two years ago, we had four swimmers qualify for State — to have 28 swimmers qualify this year was incredible!"

However, the Piranhas did more than simply qualify for State. Relay teams in two different age groups brought home first place finishes in both the Individual Medley and Freestyle Relays, and 18 swimmers qualified



2008-2009 Piranhas Swim Team and Coach, Andrea Gleason.

to swim at Regionals at the end of March. YWCA St. Paul congratulates Frankie Cerkvenik, Ruby Franzen, Grace Arlandson, Grace Regala, Kate Nelson, Erin Kennedy, Zoe Peterson and Hattie Awe for their outstanding performance at State and all Piranhas swimmers for their hard work and many accomplishments throughout the season. "Our swimmers are winners by the numbers but also for their discipline, sports-

manship and team spirit, says Gleason. "I couldn't be more proud of them."

The Piranhas range in age from 6 to 16 and compete as part of the Minnesota YMCA Swim League and USA Swimming. The team swims year-round and welcomes both novice and advanced swimmers. For more information, please contact Andrea Gleason at (651) 265-0746 or agleason@ywcaofstpaul.org.

determined to succeed

Transitional Housing Participant Works to Make Her Dream a Reality

“I had been to every job coaching class, I could do my resume with my eyes closed,” but I still wasn’t getting any phone calls, explains Kimberly, a participant in the Transitional Housing Program. When Kimberly’s phone did finally ring, it was to offer her a position as a cashier. Although trained as a chef, Kimberly reasoned some job was better than no job and she’d have the opportunity to move up if a position opened in the kitchen.

After months on the job, she was frustrated to see others promoted to jobs in the kitchen, but remained focused on the job she had been given. Eventually, new management brought new opportunities — and a new job in the kitchen! “Not once did I ever think about quitting because I didn’t get what I wanted right away,” she explains. “Nor will I ever stop pushing for my dreams.”



Kimberly, a chef and mother of one, is a participant in the YWCA Transitional Housing Program.

Kimberly wants to let you know that one day you will be sitting in a table at her restaurant or see her cooking on TV. “It might take a long time, but I believe in myself,” she says. “I can do it and if little me can do all this, just imagine what you all can do!”

for your mom & for families in need—smile

Photographer’s Guild Partners with YWCA St. Paul for New Fundraiser

This spring, share a smile with your mom and make a difference to families in need! To participate in this exciting fundraiser, simply donate \$40 or more through the Photographer’s Guild. You’ll receive a professional portrait session and 8 x 10 inch portrait and 100% of your donation will go to support families in need at the YWCA St. Paul.

Whether featuring your family, a favorite pet or your children — a photograph is a gift that always fits. Your keepsake will bring joy not only to your own family, but also a family served by YWCA St. Paul’s social service programs.

Help individuals like Kimberly (featured above) to overcome obstacles and achieve success. Call the Photographer’s Guild (651) 646-3239 to schedule your photo session today!



Just in time for Mother’s Day — Family portraits that not only capture a moment, but also help families in need.

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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 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
ywca

St. Paul



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