

yw words

eliminating racism
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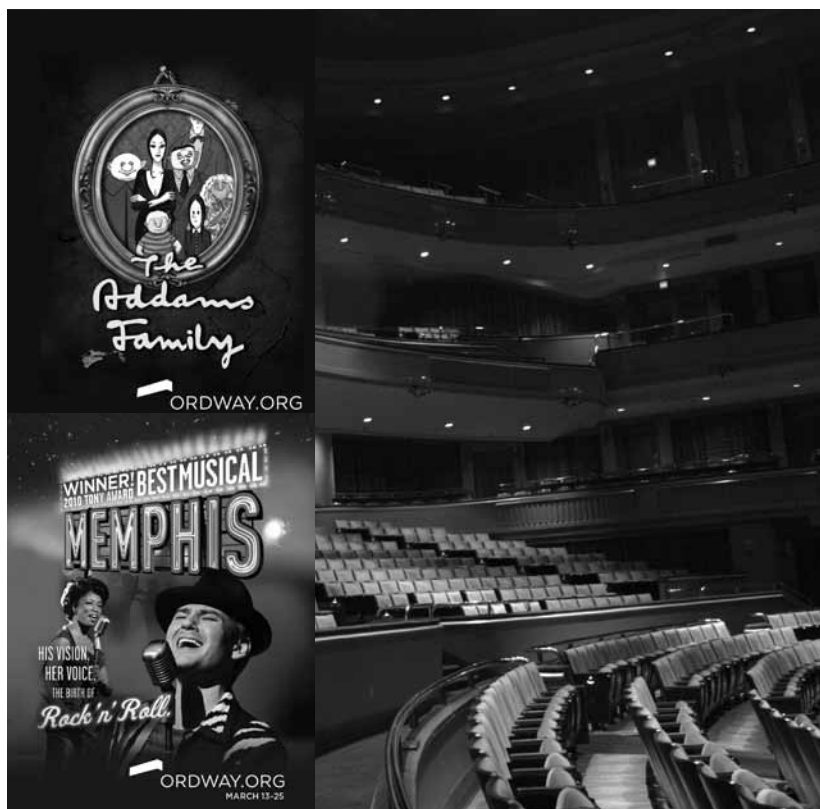
St. Paul

For Friends, Members and the Greater St. Paul Community

Winter 2011 - 2012

broadway and beyond

New Partnership Gives Families Reason to Applaud



Toe-tapping musical numbers, off-the-wall characters and thunderous standing ovations are just a few thrills of live theater. However, ticket prices and barriers to transportation prevent many low-income families and people of color from experiencing the joy of Broadway. Thanks to a new partnership, families enrolled in YWCA Youth Development programs will be able to enjoy the theater scene for free next year!

During the Ordway's 2012 theater season, families will have the opportunity to attend performances of "The Addams Family" and "Memphis". "Going to a Broadway-caliber production is something our families have never done," explained Christina McCoy, Director of Youth Development. "These shows will provide them with a positive, family-centered experience," she said. "They'll gain a new perspective of the arts and feel more connected to the wider community."

Following each performance, there will be an exclusive dialogue with the show's director. There, families will learn about the production side of theater and careers in performing arts. The grant, which extends through 2013, provides tickets and transportation for families to attend a total of four shows during the 2012 and 2013 seasons. Funding for the partnership was provided by The Saint Paul Foundation, 3M and the Broadway League.

In 2012, youth and their families will enjoy performances of "Memphis" and "The Addams Family" at the Ordway Center for Performing Arts.

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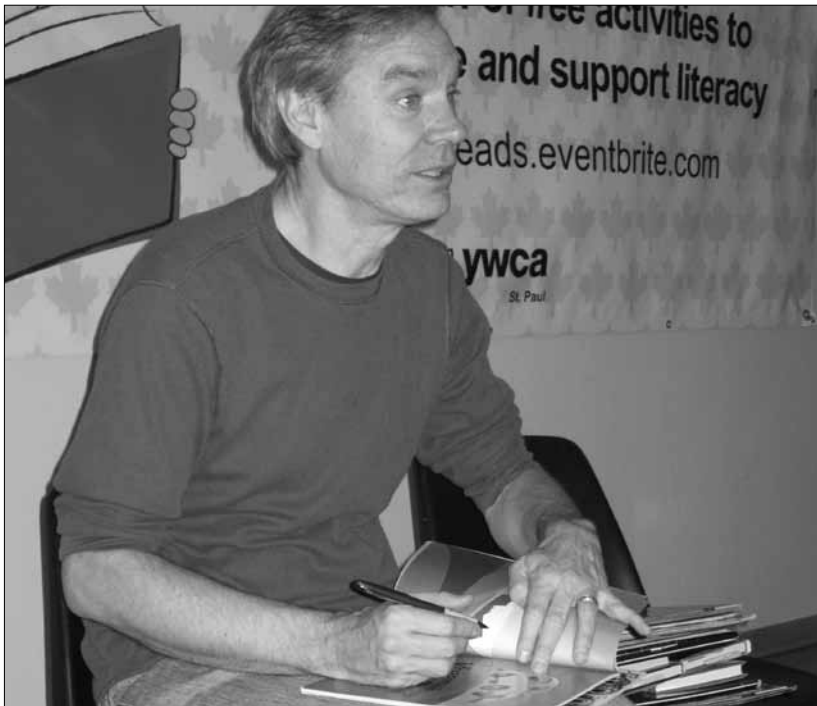
A Glimpse at Programming and Happenings



23 volunteers gave their time to help youth to Fall in Love with Reading during October. Together they read stories, made books and had fun building skills.



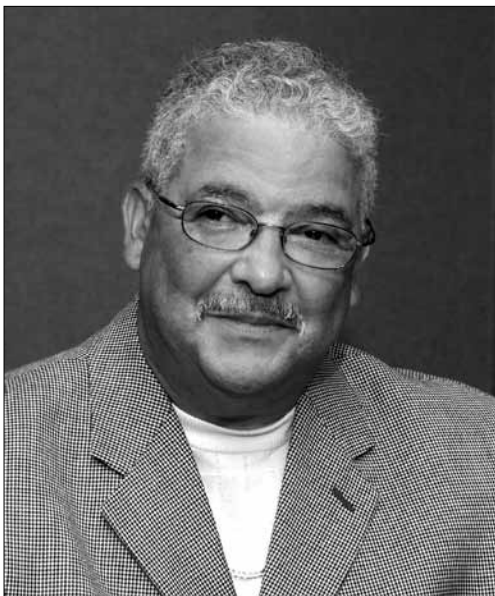
Our next Push-Up/Pull-Up Challenge is Saturday, December 17 from 7 to 9 am. Through Push-Up/Pull-Up challenges, YWCA St. Paul supporters, friends and Health & Fitness Center members have raised nearly \$2,500 for families fighting homelessness!



During the final event of the Fall in Love with Reading series, author John Coy read from his books and signed copies for fans young and old. Thank you Common Good Books, Greater Twin Cities United Way, Half Price Books, McDonald's, The Red Balloon Bookshop, Subway, St. Paul Public Library and Usborne Books & More for making the series a tremendous success!

voice your victories

Celebrating Your Successes



Executive Director, William L. Collins, Jr.

A spirit of celebration weaves through the holidays every year— and we have a lot to celebrate this holiday season at the YWCA St. Paul! Thanks to your support, women, children and families are accomplishing monumental milestones every day. As we look forward to the start of a new year, we're excited to celebrate these accomplishments with a new initiative called "Voice Your Victories".

In early 2012, our members and program participants will be invited to share how they've changed their minds, bodies and lives at the YWCA St. Paul. Whether an individual has moved their family out of a homeless shelter; improved their health; found a job, or made strides at school – their victories are amazing and deserve to be recognized!

A celebration called "Sweet Success" will be held in the spring of 2012. At the event, we look forward to sharing new success stories and celebrating how your continued support makes these achievements possible. Please join us on Facebook (facebook.com/ywcastpaul) to receive updates on Voice Your Victories, Sweet Success and other YWCA happenings.

Happy holidays to you and yours!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William L. Collins, Jr.".

horsing around with police

Kids and Officers Bond at Horse Camp

In October, youth from the Youth Achievers Program (YAP) and IMPACT program saddled up with officers from the Saint Paul Police Mounted Unit (SPPMU) for a horse camp held at the Washington County Fairgrounds. The event was part of an ongoing effort to help young people to build a rapport with officers. “Many of these youth encounter police only in the context of stress and tragic circumstances,” explained Charlie Anderson, an officer with SPPMU. “This event is an opportunity to encounter police as role models, neighbors and friends.”

Numerous volunteers – including a vet, a farrier and horse handlers – showed the children proper riding techniques and taught them about horse physiology, grooming, care and handling. Lady K, a 900-pound mare, was one of the horses who traveled from Hardwood Creek Farm in Hugo for the camp. “I was scared at first because we are like midgets next to the horses,” said one 8-year-old. “But it turned out so cool. Lady K was my favorite,” she continued.

The full day provided ample opportunities for youth to get to know not only the horses, but also the officers. “We want these kids to feel comfortable around us and know we are here to help,” Anderson said. At the end of the day, it was evident the horses had helped build both trust and friendships. Summing up the experience, one YAP participant said, “Those guys with the hats are so cool. They helped me to not feel scared.”

Sponsored by the Saint Paul Police Mounted Unit, the event was made possible with support from the Washington County Sheriff’s Office and Mounted Patrol; Hardwood Creek Farm; the Minnesota Horse Council; Dr. Donna Rued; and Chris Tilley from the Minnesota Farrier’s Association.



YAP participant, Janiquia, bonds with 900-pound Lady K at the all-day horse camp.

moving from welfare to work

YW Works Marks First Year of Service



YW Works staff celebrates the program’s first year of service.

With the national rate of unemployment hovering around 9 percent, the job market remains a bleak place for many Americans. This is especially true for African Americans, who are facing an unemployment rate of 16 percent. This September marked the first anniversary of YW Works, a YWCA St. Paul program that strives to move African American participants of the Minnesota Family Investment Program from welfare to work.

During the program’s first year, YW Works provided nearly 4,000 hours of services to its clients and linked 100 participants to full- or part-time jobs! Eighteen of those working full-time have gained independence from state services. “This is a huge accomplishment, especially because many participants have never even written a résumé before coming through our doors,” explained Tom Ellis, Director of Workforce Development.

Although helping participants to secure employment is the ultimate goal, YW Works supports them in accomplishing all the milestones that lead up to finding a job. Through the program’s culturally-specific services, participants learn interview skills, attend résumé workshops and gain self-confidence through empowerment coaching sessions.

As it begins its second year, YW Works is already off to a promising start. During September and October 2011, the program helped move 14 people into work! “YW Works put me on the road toward independence,” explained one participant, who was recently promoted to assistant manager at her place of employment. “Because of their support, I’m able to show my son that working hard leads you to your goals.”

YW Works is made possible through a contract with Workforce Solutions, a department of Ramsey County.



celebrating success

Eyes on the Future



Armani, IMPACT participant

At age 13, Armani was very smart, but she was spending time with the wrong crowd. "I was exposed to people making bad choices, and I was making those bad choices with them," she explained. She knew something had to change or her future would be at stake.

During her sophomore year of high school, Armani joined IMPACT, where she found the support she needed to get on track. She received college preparation help and participated in ACT study sessions. Most importantly, Armani built connections with other teens determined to make good choices. "Going to jail isn't a big deal for a lot of my peers, but I don't surround myself with people who are a bad influence anymore," she said. "All my closest friends are in IMPACT. We hold each other accountable for our actions."

Today, with a weighted grade-point average of 4.32, Armani has her eyes on the future. As a senior, she is a member of her school's National Honor Society, vice president of the student council and captain of the math team. She works part-time and is taking college classes through Post-Secondary Enrollment Options.

wrapping up cheer

Join us for Holiday Wrapping Party

The holidays are nearly here! To celebrate the season, we invite you to help us wrap gifts for homeless women, children and families during our annual Holiday Wrapping Party. "This gathering of community members represents what the holiday season is all about," explained Anna Haugo, Donor & Community Events Specialist. "It's a great chance to come together, celebrate our community and help others in need."

For weeks, the "elves" have been working to grant holiday wishes. Generous members, donors and friends have provided holiday gifts and financial support to ensure there is something under the tree for all the families in our Housing & Supportive Services programs.

This year's Holiday Wrapping Party will be Saturday, December 10, from 10 a.m. to noon. With your help, we'll be able to bundle up hundreds of presents and share the joy of the season with families fighting homelessness. To RSVP, contact Anna Haugo at ahaugo@ywcaofstpaul.org or at (651) 265-0792.



Last year attendees wrapped more than 300 gifts for families fighting homelessness.

Special thanks to Ecolab for supporting holiday activities at the YWCA St. Paul and making the Holiday Wrapping Party possible.

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YWCA St. Paul is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

eliminating racism
empowering women
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St. Paul



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