

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

hartford region

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YW Matters



Newsletter of the YWCA Hartford Region Fall 2010

making the most of me with ywlc meet ciyavah

In this issue:

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Early Learning Childcare
Before & After School Childcare
The Money Conference for Women
Time Out for Parents
Young Women's Leadership Corps
Soromundi Commons Supportive Housing
Emergency Shelter for Women
Stand Against Racism
VITA

Save the Date!

October 23—The Money Conference for Women

December 4—YWCA Annual Craft Fair

April 6—In the Company of Women Luncheon



Ciyavah Daniels, Assistant Teacher at YWKidslink and former YWLC participant, with a student at Duffy's YWKidslink in West Hartford.

“CC!” a few children yell out as Ciyavah Daniels arrives for work. Twenty year old Ciyavah loves her job as Assistant Teacher at *YWKidslink*, a before and after school program at Duffy School in West Hartford. “CC”, as most people call her, has been working at *YWKidslink* for one year. Her story began over eight years ago with the YWCA Hartford Region's Young Women's Leadership Corps (YWLC).

As a seventh grader at Classical Magnet School in Hartford, Ciyavah heard about YWLC from one of her teachers. “I wanted to do something more for women and focus on my self esteem and leadership skills,” she said. YWLC, a leadership development program for young women, was the perfect fit. The

goal of YWLC is to engage young women in productive activities that develop leadership skills, encourage community involvement and guide young women towards success in all areas of their lives.

She participated in YWLC for three years. “I learned how to be a better leader,” said Ciyavah. “We went on college field trips and participated in community projects. I realized that I could go to college. I also made a lot of new friends from all different backgrounds,” she added. Most importantly, she increased her self esteem and learned that beauty is not found in magazines. In short, Ciyavah learned to “*make the most of me!*” the core goal of YWLC.

Now, Ciyavah not only works for *YWKidslink*, but is majoring in

01
Meet Ciyavah-Success with YWLC

02
Message from the CEO

03
Luncheon Speaker Announced!

04
Soromundi Commons Five Year Anniversary Day of Caring 2010

05
Save the Date! *Money Conference for Women*

06
Use Your Voice. Vote!
Child Care Staff Completes August Training

07
7th Annual YWCA Craft Fair

08
Save the Dates
Board of Directors

Continued on page 7

message from the ceo

Dear Friend of the YWCA,



The YWCA's 9th annual *Money Conference for Women* will be held on October 23rd. With the economic downturn, now -- more than ever before -- we all need financial literacy. Yet, many people still don't know the terms of their mortgage or the interest rate they're paying. And, at a time when we are borrowing *more* money, most Americans can't tell you what compound interest is.

In 2010, the costs of financial illiteracy are frighteningly high, because people must take so much more responsibility for their finances. Many pensions have been replaced with 401(k)s. More employees have to purchase health insurance on their own. We have so many more important but difficult financial decisions to make.

The *Money Conference for Women* is all about women taking charge when it comes to their finances. You will learn how to best to manage for your short- and long- term prosperity. You'll find out how to plan, to spend wisely, and to save well. We hope to see many of you there.

The stakes are even *higher* for us as women, because the financial playing field remains so uneven. Women working full-time in the United States still earn only 77 percent of what their male counterparts are making. Nearly four out of ten families living in poverty in 2009 were female headed-households the largest number recorded in the past five years. And, so sadly, more than two out of ten children live in poverty.

Not surprisingly, people of color fare worst of all. In 2009, Black households experienced the largest decline in earnings of any group, by race. So we certainly must learn to do the most with the money we *do* have. But our *true* economic security depends on eliminating discrimination based on gender and race. For example, we must provide *all* of our children with the quality education that will allow them to prosper. And job creation must focus on jobs that provide a living wage and benefits, *without* discrimination.

In that light, we also encourage you to join with the YWCA as we work for solutions to chronic inequities. Our new advocacy agenda calls for systemic change that promotes economic empowerment for women and racial justice for all. *We are committed.*

Friends: Educate yourself, empower yourself, and join the fight for lasting change and a more just society.

One woman at a time, and all together.

Deborah Ulmar

CEO

YWCA Programs are funded in part by grants from the City of East Hartford, City of Hartford, State of Connecticut (Dept. of Children and Families/Dept. of Education/ Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services/ Dept. of Social Services), Town of Manchester, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, and The United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut.

We would like to thank the following organizations for financial or in-kind support of our programs and services:

Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Camp Burt-Tetlow Foundation, Inc.; George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation, Bank of America and Alan S. Parker, Co-trustees; Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; ING, Lincoln Financial Foundation; McDonald Family Trust; and Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation

...eliminating racism

Meet Ciyavah cont...

Child Psychology at Capital Community College. She has plans to transfer to Central Connecticut State University next year. Her long term plans include moving down south and working as a child psychologist. "I want to help kids while they are young. You can fix a lot of problems by addressing them at an early age," she said.

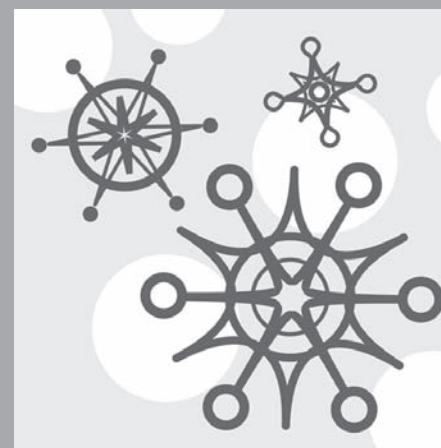
Working at *YWKidslink* has helped Ciyavah prepare for a career in child psychology. Studies show that children enrolled in before and after school care are less likely to be victims of crime or participate in anti-social behaviors. Ciyavah can see this first hand that quality child care helps children to learn, play and grow with enriched curriculum and activities. Before and after school programs like *YWKidslink* help keep kid safe, improve academic success and relieve the stresses on today's working families.

"Patience is the most important thing I learned from my job," she said. Anyone watching Ciyavah work with children can see this virtue at work. You can also see the enthusiasm and dedication she has for her job.

Ciyavah is not worried about the challenges ahead. "Many people think women can't do certain things, but we can. I learned that in YWLC," she said. Empowering women is the YW's mission. Ciyavah has put this mission into practice by registering for the YWCA's *Money Conference for Women* in October. She wants to learn how to budget and manage her money.

YWCA Hartford Region helps over 100 young women each year become future leaders with YWLC. With help from YWCA, young women learn that anything is possible!

ywca 7th annual craft fair!



Saturday, December 4, 2010
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
78 North Main Street
Manchester, CT
(Community "Y" Building)

Crafters & Vendors
Bake Sale
FREE Gift Wrapping
Gift Basket Drawing
Children's Activities

Call (860) 645-2240 for more information.

financial literacy in tough economic times

it's your voice, your future and your vote!



Voting is the single most important tool that Americans have to help shape the policies that affect their lives. The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy and every eligible person in the

United States should exercise that right at every opportunity.

Many of us take this right for granted, but we shouldn't. Although in 1870, the 15th Amendment gave all men, regardless of race or color, the right to vote, many states prevented men of color from voting by using literacy tests, poll taxes, intimidation, threats, and violence. Women did not gain the right to vote until 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment. In 1965, President Johnson signed into law the "Voting Rights Act", which outlawed discriminatory voting practices that had been responsible for the widespread disenfranchisement of women and men of color in the U.S. The provisions of that law are actively monitored today to assure everyone's right to vote.

WHY SHOULD YOU VOTE?

The only way democracy works is if citizens, young and old, actively participate! A government by the people and for the people does not work **without** the people. While it is easy to say "one vote doesn't make a difference" the reality is that every vote counts. Recent primary election results have proven that. When your vote is combined with the votes of others who share your views it becomes a unified voice that makes a difference.

November 2, 2010 is an important election day for the State of Connecticut. Many key state offices including the Governor and a Senator will be filled by new people. Other key state and federal positions are also at stake. These are all positions that come with responsibilities that impacts all of our lives – the young, the old, the rich, the poor and our children.

This election holds the key to your future. Exercise your right and make your vote count!

ywca continues its commitment to quality child care

YWCA Hartford Region held its training conference for their child care professionals. YW staff left the training energized and ready to begin the new school year with an array of techniques and ideas to enrich their work with children. This training represents the high quality of YWCA child care programs and staff.

The theme for this year was *Together Encourage And Create Hope (T.E.A.C.H)*. Topics included creative curriculum, responsive teaching, engaging and strengthening family relationships, and racial justice. Special guest speaker Kenya Rutland gave a dynamic presentation on diversity and communication in the work place.

Thank you to our child care staff for their hard work and dedication to assure children are ready to learn and grow.



YWCA Hartford Region child care staff completed their August training. This training exemplifies YWCA's commitment to quality child care.

LUNCHEON SPEAKER ANNOUNCED!

**Featuring Alfre Woodard
Actress & Activist**



YWCA Hartford Region is pleased to announce our 2011 Keynote Speaker, actress and activist, Alfre Woodard. Best known for her film and television projects over the past 32 years such as *Desperate Housewives*, *True Blood* and *The Family that Preys*, Ms. Woodard is also the co-founder of Artists for a New South Africa. Artists for a New South Africa is a nonprofit dedicated to combating the spread of HIV/AIDS, assisting children orphaned by the disease, advancing human and civil rights and educating and empowering youth. Woodard's work helps build bonds between our nations through arts, culture and our shared pursuit of social justice. A long time supporter of the YWCA movement, Ms. Woodard is sure to deliver an inspirational message that celebrates the YWCA mission.

We hope you can join us for another successful luncheon!

**Save the Date!
IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN LUNCHEON**

**APRIL 6, 2011-CONNECTICUT CONVENTION CENTER
For more information call (860) 525-1163, Ext. 269**

yw in the community...

a place to call home

Soromundi Commons celebrates five year anniversary



(l-r): Nicole Davis, Case Manger YWCA Hartford Region; Kate McElroy, Project Manager of Soromundi Commons; Courtney James, Chrysalis Center; and Erica Kane, Chrysalis Center at the five year anniversary celebration of Soromundi Commons.

"It's hard to believe it has been five years already," said Deborah Ullman, CEO YWCA Hartford Region, at the five year anniversary of Soromundi Commons. Soromundi is an innovative supportive housing facility that provides emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing. This premier facility is a collaboration of YWCA Hartford Region and Chrysalis Center, Inc. Soromundi Commons is a nationally recognized model that provides a continuum of housing on site, from shelter to permanent housing, coupled with supportive services including case management, health care, and a community learning center. Each year, Soromundi provides more than 130 individuals with safe and supportive housing with emergency shelter, 13 transitional and 35 permanent affordable apartments.

"We have had visitors from around the country and have won a number of awards, but nothing is more important than the numerous lives changed in the short five years of the project," said Sharon L. Castelli, Executive Director of Chrysalis Center, Inc.

The anniversary celebration included guest speakers, board members and supporters. Later in the afternoon, residents were invited for a special celebration. The residents shared their inspiring stories of how Soromundi helped them beat the odds and move toward a better life.

Thank you to Chrysalis, Konover, YWCA staff, and all of our funders for making this project a reality and changing countless lives in the process.

day of caring 2010

tropical storm and hot weather does not stop volunteers!

The hot weather and threat of tropical storm Earl did not stop volunteers from participating in United Way *Day of Caring* on September 3. The event brought enthusiastic volunteers who worked at various project sites at YWCA Hartford Region. This year marked the 19th annual *Day of Caring*. Thousands of volunteers from over 50 local workplaces participated at 200 nonprofit sites in the Hartford area.

Volunteers from four Hartford area corporations participated in YWCA projects. Volunteers from Aetna read to children and helped with an art project at the Elmwood Early Learning Center in West Hartford. The Elmwood Center also enjoyed a special visit from United Way CEO and President Susan B. Dunn and Campaign Chair Andy Bessette from Travelers. A group from Travelers helped the Manchester Creative Nursery School prepare for their 59th opening year by cleaning and organizing the classroom. Bank of America volunteers participated in outdoor play and art projects with children at the East Hartford Early Learning Center.

In addition, a group of volunteers from Northeast Utilities came to Camp Aya Po armed with bucket trucks, chain saws and other equipment to trim trees, clear brush and pull in the docks from the very chilly pond. YWCA thanks all of the volunteers and their employers for this donation of time and talent. Thank you for caring!



Employees from Bank of America volunteered at YWCA's Early Learning Center in East Hartford. The volunteers assisted YWCA staff with activities for children.

you have the power to make a difference

get involved become a member join the ywca

www.ywcahartford.org

or call 860) 525-1163

find us on...

