



hartford region

For Immediate Release

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30 Young Women are Empowered to Take Their Place in the World
YWCA Hartford Region's YWLC Summer Institute Celebrates Successful Summer

Hartford, CT – YWCA Hartford Region's Young Women's Leadership Corps (YWLC) Summer Institute recently ended but the lessons the young women learned will last a lifetime. Thirty young women, grades 7 – 12, from the greater Hartford area spent five weeks learning more about themselves and preparing for their future. "I believe the YWLC program is a life changing experience. In the future, I want to be a surgeon, and with the help of YWLC, I know I can achieve my goal," one participant shared.

The young women participated in many activities which exposed them to new career possibilities, helped to build self-confidence and encouraged giving back to the community, including a community service project with the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut assembling literacy kits for local students. The young women also spent Thursdays at Billings Forge where they learned how to cook with local, fresh ingredients and tried new and different foods. They also created their own line of skin care products that they then sold at the Billings Forge Farmers' Market. Encouraging the young women to continue their education after high school, a panel of experts discussed community college options during a seminar tailored for both the parents and the young women.

Throughout the program, several workshops were held at Aetna corporate headquarters and led by Aetna employees. Workshop topics included financial wellness, community service, computer technology, health and wellness, and leadership development. One young woman discovered she loved computer technology as she learned to take a computer apart and put it back together.

The program culminated with a celebration for the young women and their families. "This program has taught me I do have a voice and I can be heard," one participant shared.

Now in its 13th year, YWLC empowers young women to know that all things are possible, and has helped hundreds of young women build self-esteem, reach their goals and achieve their dreams.

Thank you to all of the individuals and organizations who contributed to the success of the 2014 YWLC Summer Institute: the Aetna Summer Institute Planning Team and Aetna employees, Billings

Forge Community Works and its employees, CRT Summer Lunch Program, Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Hartford – Connecticut Children’s Medical Center Injury Prevention Center, Jackie Bright, FUD Inc., Looking in Theater, Representatives from Tunxis, Capital and Manchester Community Colleges, Todd Fairchild, Frances Sharp, and Alice Turner.

Funders who support the YWLC program year round and/or Summer Institute include: Aetna, Inc.; Aetna Foundation; Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Camp Burt-Tetlow Foundation; City of Hartford Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation; The Ensworth Charitable Foundation, J. Walton Bissell Foundation; Hartford Foundation for Public Giving; Travelers Foundation, the charitable arm of Travelers; and United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut.

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Established in 1867, YWCA Hartford Region is the third oldest affiliate of YWCA, a women’s membership movement dedicated to **eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all**. YWCA Hartford Region provides programs and services in the greater Hartford Region including child care, supportive housing, teen leadership development, racial justice awareness, financial literacy and economic empowerment. For more information, visit www.ywcahartford.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).