YWCA & YOU

NEWS & UPDATES: WHY *You* MAKE A DIFFERENCE

FALL **2022**

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

Hartford Region

135 BROAD STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06105

We have news for you!

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This was my second year attending YW Leadership Corps Summer Institute. And it was one of the best summers ever! Now, I'm more confident and better at public speaking and speech writing.

MCKENZIE

THE YOUNG GIRLS OF YW LEADERSHIP CORPS ARE FULL OF GRATITUDE!

With *your* support, YWLC changes the trajectory of girls' lives and sets them up for lifelong success!

YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CORPS (YWLC) serves approximately 150 young girls per year through partnerships with Bloomfield, East Hartford, Windsor and Hartford school districts. In addition, there are even more girls that attend Saturday Academy and Summer Institute. Many of our participants come back year after year! The YWLC programing includes field trips and exploration visits to worksites, educational institutions, museums and more. The program teaches our girls to confront issues of racism, justice and inequality in a way that empowers them to make a change and become leaders. Participants learn to discuss difficult experiences that deal with community issues, self-esteem and self-advocacy. Most of our alumna leave the program feeling confident, poised, empowered and ready to lead!

Your gift ensures that our girls continue to have experiences and opportunities designed to help them thrive!

- ☑ **Build lasting friendships**
- ☑ **Gain self-confidence & positive self image**
- ☑ **Acquire leadership skills**

These skills directly influence their capacity to lead in life!

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Meet Trinity Thomas, an Alumna of YWCA Hartford Region Leadership Corps. She is Confident, Strong, Smart, Resilient and ready to contribute to her community!

TRINITY is a 2022 graduate of Spelman College, where she received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She currently works for the Hartford Healthcare Institute of Living. Because of your support, she is off to a great start and plans to continue her post graduate degree in Social Work, to earn her MSW.

Her dream is to work in mental health…encouraging communities of color to seek help. She wants to help eradicate the stigma around mental health, especially in marginalized communities.

She joined YW Leadership Corps as a very shy and reserved 12-year-old. Her mother insisted that she attend YWLC Summer Institute. She shares that she was terrified that first year in the Summer Institute. By the end of the session, she made great friends, and attended workshops on interviewing skills and public speaking. Never did she think she would be so transformed. As a longtime high achiever, Trinity recalls how much her parents and sisters motivated her. Raised in Windsor and Vernon while attending Windsor High School, she participated in an accelerated program and graduated with high honors. Trinity describes chasing the feeling she always got when her parents were proud.

Today she considers herself a *born leader*, thanks to *you!*

> *A lot of what I am today is because of YW Leadership Corps.*
>
> **TRINITY THOMAS**

LAURYN HALL is yet another success story among YW Leadership Corps. Lauryn is pursuing her passion to study mathematics and psychiatry. And we have no doubt that her dreams will come true. As a junior at Academy of International Studies and a participant in YWLC since 8th grade, Lauryn has always proven herself as a high achiever and an excellent student who is dedicated to her studies and her community. She received the President's Award for obtaining the highest GPA in her grade level and the National African American Recognition Award through College Board for obtaining high PSAT scores. She is also a member of the National Honor Society. Not only does she have an impressive academic record, she gives back to her community in very meaningful ways. She attended the Traveler's Leadership Summit offered as part of YWLC Summer Institute and the Boss Up Empowerment Conference. Lauryn was most recently recognized at the Foundation for Educational Opportunities, Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.'s 8th Annual Hartford Girls Rock event for her many achievements. Thanks to *you* and YW Leadership Corps, she has confidence to be comfortable when out of her comfort zone. Lauryn's ability to take charge and lead does not go unnoticed!

> *YWLC made significant contributions to my development as a young black woman.*
>
> **LAURYN HALL**

NEW!

YWCA HARTFORD REGION HAS LAUNCHED YW TECH LAB!

A new FREE three-month career training program in web design. Go to **https://www.ywcahartford.org/yw-tech-lab/yw-tech-lab.html** for more information.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Timely Conversations That Bring Us Together

WOMEN IN FAITH: FAITH ACTION IN TRANSFORMING HARTFORD

YWCA HARTFORD REGION kicked off the fall with Women in **FAITH** leadership breakfast. Faith-based institutions are the cornerstone of strength in our communities. They are the places and spaces where people congregate to share purpose, love, power and faith. YWCA Hartford Region seeks to deepen our relationship with communities of faith so that together we can better support women and families and create systemic change throughout Hartford.

This group was convened to meet and network to share knowledge, wisdom, resources and collaborative strategies. The goal is to build solutions that address the gaps and needs for families in the community. We believe the faith community is a respected force for social justice and sustainable change.

Your support helps us continue this important work!

WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

DAWN LAZARUS

I have long admired the amazing work of YWCA Hartford Region. For almost 10 years, I have been able to attend the In the Company of Women Luncheon and Money Conference where I was able to connect with so many inspiring supporters of this organization. The vision and mission of the organization align with the values I learned from my parents and my fervor to serve is bolstered by the many philanthropic women in my life, including my five sisters. This is what YWCA stands for.

After completing my undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania, I dedicated my early professional career to education as a K-8 gifted program teacher. Life experiences lead me back to the Greater Hartford area where I continued to work in education before pivoting to financial services. As a former educator, I am impressed with the staff and curriculum at the YWCA Early Learning Centers and their ability to provide safe, affordable and quality childcare. This is definitely *my Why*.

I am proud to have been invited to serve on the Board and the development committee following in the footsteps of my sister, Annie, who served on the YWCA Hartford Region's Board of Directors for 8 years.

As we prepare to launch our new social enterprise, Persimmon Petals, I am thrilled to be a part of YWCA Hartford Region and spread the word about the good work we are doing.

A NEW ON-LINE FLORAL AND GIFT SHOP
FROM YWCA HARTFORD REGION!

PERSIMMON PETALS is an exciting new social enterprise which will help support programs and services vital to girls, women and families in our community.

We are thrilled to announce that Persimmon Petals recently made its debut at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Greater Together 2022 event. This was the perfect venue for our pre-launch, as Hartford Foundation for Public Giving helped us create this social enterprise.

HERE'S WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY...

"The Persimmon Petals team provided stunning floral arrangements for our 99th annual meeting. They listened to our needs, incorporated our theme into their designs, and respected our overall budget. Our guests were pleased to read the hand-written notes from YWCA program participants and learn how these "flowers that empower" will support young women in the Hartford region. We look forward to the official launch of this new social enterprise project. Congratulations, and thanks again.

THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM AT THE HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING

PERSIMMON petals
Flowers that Empower

Our soft-launch is scheduled for November, so it was a great opportunity to provide a "sneak-peek" of our new manager, Kirstin's, talent and showcase the quality product that customers will be able to order from Persimmon Petals.