YWCA & YOU

NEWS & UPDATES: WHY *You* MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SPRING **2023**

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

Hartford Region

135 BROAD STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06105

We have news for you!

1. **Please follow us !**
   #ywcahartford
2. **Stay up to date!**
   Access our newsroom and event calendar at **ywcahartford.org**
3. **Sign up online!**
   Receive a FREE subscription to our e-newsletter at **ywcahartford.org**

Jackie Joyner-Kersee wants to be remembered as a good person. She further explains, ***"When you are a good person, you do good things."***

We can't all be track stars, but we can all be good people.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN
Equity Isn't A Game

Because of *you*, and more than 1100 other guests and supporters, In the Company of Women luncheon was an amazing success!

We recently gathered for the 28th In the Company of Women luncheon to hear six time Olympic medalist, Jackie Joyner-Kersee, share how **Equity** played a role in her life and how sports can bring people together from all walks of life. She is a living example of how resilience can put you at the top of your game, even when you are being knocked down.

Scan to watch the video

Named by *Sports Illustrated* as the "Greatest Female Athlete of the 20th Century," it was an honor to hear her story…so motivational, genuine, passionate and kind. Jackie spent part of her time sharing her life experiences with the YW Leadership Corps. More than 100 young girls were part of this exciting day! Giving back to young people is something that comes naturally to this track superstar and talking with these young girls was just one example. One of the participants shared, "when I heard how she overcame so many obstacles, I thought maybe I could do it also."

Photograph (top left): Deidre Montague, Hartford Courant

YOUR SUPPORT IS EMPOWERING
THE YOUNG GIRLS OF YW LEADERSHIP CORPS TO SUCCEED!

Decision Day makes YWLC girls jump for joy!

WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE that Bloomfield and Windsor High Schools are graduating 9 members of our YW Leadership Corps. Each of these girls will be heading to college in the fall. As far away as Howard University, in Washington D.C., and as close as Central Connecticut State. With the help and guidance of YWLC, "The girl's blossom right before our eyes," shares one of the high school liaisons. We believe all of our girls can achieve their dreams to succeed and YWLC provides them with the tools required. They all have unique talents, skills and gifts that just need to be realized and nurtured! Many of the girls share that they are more self-confident, they have made lasting friendships and they are becoming leaders in their communities. Thank you for helping to make dreams come true for the young girls of YW Leadership Corps. We are grateful to you and your generosity for making this program possible.

Celebrating College Decision Day!

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY...
THE SUCCESS STORIES JUST KEEP ON COMING!

TWO YEARS AGO, twins Saarah and Maryam Kabal celebrated their Decision Day. They both are graduates of Windsor High School and now in their third year at the University of Connecticut. Saarah and Maryam met Ms. Uneeder, Director of Women and Girls Programs, who introduced them to YWLC when they were sixteen years old and sophomores in high school. Their cousins were also in the program and encouraged them to join. They experienced college tours, worked on their elevator pitch, networking and public speaking skills. It gave them many opportunities to think about what they would do once they graduated from high school.

This day, Saarah and Maryam were at the UConn School of Engineering. Saarah was participating in an experiment demonstrating a hot air balloon. The instructor and Dean of the Engineering School were visiting each station and team as they presented their findings. Surprisingly, Saarah, a communications major, was enrolled in the Engineering class for fun. Yes, that's right, for fun! She confesses that she doubted herself a lot when she registered for the class. But she said that it is important to be tenacious. It is important to give it a chance before giving up and she actually did very well in the course. Needless to say, she is a very smart young woman and will go far in her life.

Maryam, a third year business major at UConn, shares that she was incredibly shy before joining YWLC. Now she is able to talk with, meet and even interview people. "It was revolutionary in terms of shaping me as a young woman. To graduate from high school and have the confidence in myself, to believe in myself and love myself – the YWLC program was very important in building those facets of my character." She is very happy that she decided to attend UConn and has found a community that embraces her.

Each of these young women give credit to YW Leadership Corps and Ms. Uneeder for much of their leadership development!

Maryam's decision to go into business originated with a bakery the twins started 12 years ago – called Twins Bakery 73, offering custom cakes, cupcakes and other specialty desserts. They both have the skills to do the baking but wanted to learn the business side to help them continue to grow. As a Communications major, Saarah understands how her marketing courses would help with their cupcake business. Upon graduating Maryam wants to work on her business but is also keeping doors open because there are so many opportunities and things she can do with a business and marketing degree.

Thank *you* for *your* support in helping young women like this continue to thrive!

WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

JUDY CASPERSON

Judy Casperson's involvement with YWCA Hartford Region started while she was working for a local bank, shortly after her family (two daughters and husband) moved to CT. The bank asked Judy if she would like to host a table on financial literacy at our Money Conference. Empowering women and financial literacy was right up her alley! It was clear to her that she had a passion that was directly aligned with YWCA's mission. She recalls the first time she attended In the Company of Women luncheon. It was an amazing experience to see that many like-minded people in one room. "I'd never seen anything like it and I've been to many luncheons and events, but I viewed this as something new and different."

In 2006, she was invited to join the board. Judy shares that she had the distinct honor of attending Luncheon for many years…hearing keynotes like Maya Angelou twice, Gloria Steinem, Viola Davis and so many other distinguished keynotes. She was very involved with YW Leadership Corps, coaching on financial literacy as well as Money Conference and In the Company of Women, as a table captain.

When Adrienne Cochrane came on board as YWCA Hartford Region's CEO, she encouraged Judy to re-engage with YWCA. This past October, she was delighted to be one of the Money Conference speakers. She was also invited to join those providing seed money for the new social enterprise funding for Persimmon Petals. She loved the idea of getting in on the ground floor and being a part of a Social Enterprise that will have a lasting impact on our community. She feels that so many women get in their own way in terms of creating wealth for themselves. "I want to provide a gateway to making it a natural step."

Today, with Casperson Consulting, she helps businesses and individuals with coaching in leadership development, financial literacy and retreat facilitation. She is most passionate about helping women find ways to be empowered. Financial security and financial literacy is key to that end.

WHEN WE SAY THAT PERSIMMON PETALS HAS AWARD-WINNING DESIGNERS, WE MEAN IT!

Our designers, Kirstin Havelevitch and Annette Peck, recently showcased their talents at the 40th Annual Fine Art & Flowers competition at the Wadsworth Atheneum and took home first and second place!

PERSIMMON petals

Flowers that Empower

Persimmon Petals is a YWCA Hartford Region social enterprise. This means that every purchase *you* make supports our programs and services!

We are planting the seeds for continued growth and success for women, girls and families in our community through Persimmon Petals, our online flower and gift boutique! You can be a part of it by shopping with us.

Scan to purchase

eliminating racism empowering women ywca Hartford Region

STAND AGAINST RACISM

UNTIL JUSTICE...JUST IS is a signature campaign of YWCA USA to build community among those who work for racial justice and to raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in our communities. This campaign is one part of a larger national strategy to fulfill our mission of eliminating racism. This year we hosted a symposium with an opening poem by Connecticut Poet Laureate Antoinette Brim-Bell; an Exploration of Justice from a Legal Perspective by Sharmese L. Walcott, Hartford State's Attorney; and an Exploration of Justice from a Community Perspective featuring multiple artists, including David C. Jackson.

WE SALUTE YOU Ms. VANESSA!

Thank you for 40 years of exceptional service!

Vanessa McQuillar, AKA "Ms. Vanessa," recently celebrated her 40th anniversary with YWCA Hartford Region. Ms. Vanessa is the first person you'll meet as you enter our Hartford office, always greeting visitors with a warm, genuine smile and eagerness to help. When reflecting on her four decades of service with the organization, she humbly shares, "Helping people is not for everybody, but it is for me." Everyone at YWCA Hartford Region thanks Ms. Vanessa for her unwavering commitment, compassion and kindness to the Hartford community for the past 40 years.

THANK YOU!