

yw words

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

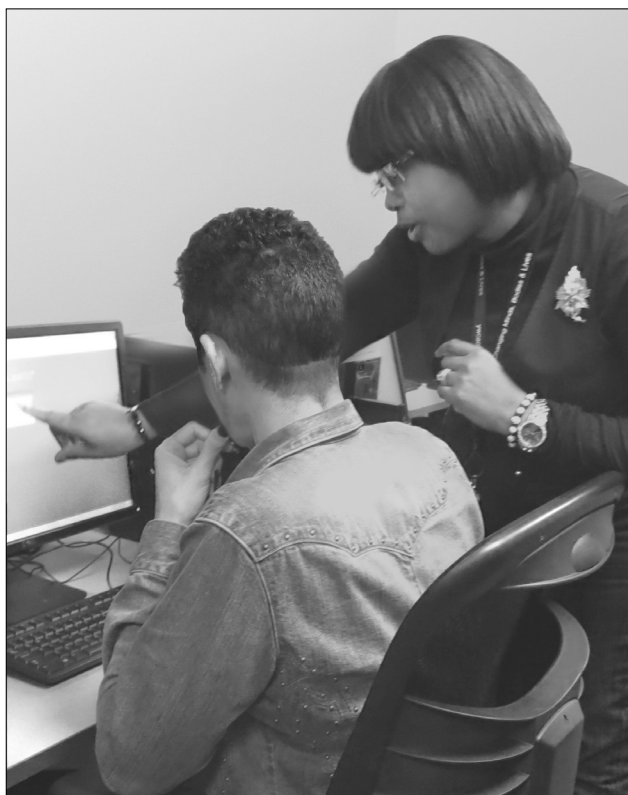
St. Paul

For Friends, Members and the Greater St. Paul Community

Spring 2014

opening doors to opportunity

Job Seekers Ring in New Year with New Credential



The YWCA St. Paul recently helped 19 job seekers to earn their GED.

While many people are working on resolutions to lose weight, stop smoking or pay off debt—a group of local job seekers is starting 2014 better equipped to move into the workforce. Last quarter, the YWCA St. Paul helped 19 low-income Ramsey County residents to earn their General Educational Development (GED) diploma.

Launched in October, the project served recipients of the Minnesota Family Investment Program by preparing them to obtain their certificate before significant changes to the test went into effect on January 1. “For people who never completed high school, the GED is a powerful tool that can open the door to wider educational and employment opportunities,” explains Tom Ellis, Director of Workforce Development.

In addition to expanding options for the future, the credential can also greatly impact earning potential. On average, those with a high school diploma or GED earn 30 percent more each year than their less-educated peers.

To help more learners earn their credentials, the YWCA worked in collaboration with the Ronald M. Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning to facilitate a nine-week series of trainings, tutoring sessions and practice tests. The YWCA also provided incentives to participants as they worked toward program completion.

Jennifer, who obtained her GED through the project, has already applied for college. The experience has not only opened new doors for her, it has also inspired her daughter to earn her GED. “Thank you [YWCA] for all of your support!” she said.

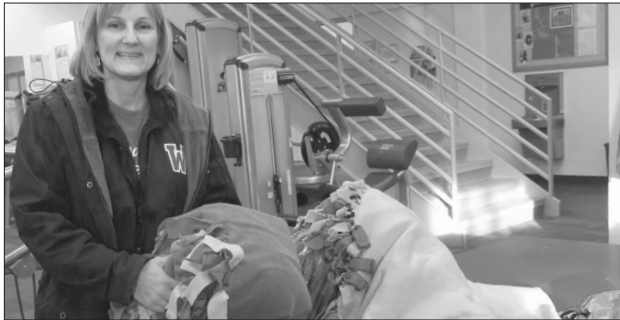
This project was made possible thanks to funding from Ramsey County Workforce Solutions.

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within our walls

A Glimpse at Programming and Happenings



Blankets made by sixth-graders at Woodbury Middle School kept families in our Housing & Supportive Services programs warm this winter.



We celebrated the graduation of 13 Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL) participants. They'll soon be on the road to success with help from their new credentials.



YAP participants are staying active thanks to new wheels courtesy of Allina Health and Free Bikes 4 Kidz.

youth matter

Collaborating for a Better Saint Paul



Chief Executive Officer, William L. Collins, Jr.

Although violent crime has generally decreased over the past decade, for the last several years, Saint Paul has experienced an increase in youth violence.

Last summer, the YWCA St. Paul proudly joined a special project that aimed to curb crime downtown and divert at-risk youth from future incarceration.

To address the issue of youth violence and crime, the Mayor's Office and Saint Paul Police Department formed the Summer Youth Outreach and Intervention Initiative. The YWCA was invited to join as lead community partner.

Over the summer months, the initiative placed skilled youth workers on the streets where they were able to connect with young people and make referrals for educational, social and employment services. In total, the project reached 236 youth from July through September. During this same period, youth arrest rates in Saint Paul declined an average of 40 percent.

We are proud to have played an important role in the success of this project and look forward to participating in ongoing initiatives to extend and expand services that both combat crime and help more young people to find a positive path. I look forward to sharing updates and results with you in coming months.

William L. Collins Jr.

expanding education

YWCA Engages Youth in Learning After School

Even with frigid temperatures causing multiple school closings this winter, educational opportunities have been abundant for young people at Jackson Magnet Elementary. Each week, after challenging their minds in the classroom, more than 200 students head to the cafeteria to continue their day of learning.

Now in its second year, the Afterschool Success Program at Jackson is part of a larger initiative to provide quality out-of-school activities for at-risk youth in grades K-6. The collaboration between the YWCA St. Paul, City of Saint Paul, Saint Paul Public Schools, Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood and Sprockets offers an extended day and transportation at no cost to students.

"We're thrilled to be back this year providing not only a place for youth to grow after school, but also peace of mind for parents who know their kids are safe and learning while they're at work," says Tara Munroe, YWCA School Success Manager.

Monday through Thursday, the YWCA oversees programming at Jackson, where facilitators from partnering agencies lead a variety of activities. Students practice reading and math; do fun science projects; and express themselves through visual arts, choir and dance.

One third-grader, whose favorite activity is tennis, is excited to be participating in the program again this year. "This is the coolest part of my day. I get to learn fun stuff and show my friends!" she said.



Students enrolled in the Afterschool Success Program at Jackson Elementary enjoy fun and learning after hours.

sweet success

Celebrating the Achievements of Women, Children & Families

Mark your calendars! Sweet Success is just around the corner. The celebration will bring together members, donors, volunteers and friends to celebrate the many successes made possible by YWCA programs and services.

An hors d'oeuvres and dessert reception, the event will include a social hour and short program to honor the accomplishments of four program participants as well as recognize the outstanding contributions of several volunteers.

The event will take place on Tuesday, May 20 at Saint Paul College on Marshall Avenue in St. Paul. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Darcie Moore at dmoore@ywcaofstpaul.org or 651-265-0718.



Rozan, an honoree at Sweet Success 2013 accepting her award.

celebrating success

A Courageous New Start

Fearful for their safety, Tavanja bravely fled an abusive relationship to start a new life for herself and her three children. Although relieved to be free from the violence, starting over was especially difficult because it took her away from family and friends.

After spending three months at a domestic violence shelter, Tavanja and her children joined the YWCA St. Paul Transitional Housing Program (THP), where she began working with her case manager to rebuild her life. Within a year, she made incredible strides, earning both her General Educational Development (GED) diploma and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credentials.

Armed with new skills, Tavanja was ready to help when her neighbor suffered third-degree burns in an apartment fire. Putting her training to use, she volunteered to provide aftercare and wound management.

Today, Tavanja is focused on expanding her credentials and achieving her goal of landing a job at a hospital. She's currently enrolled in a phlebotomy program and looks forward to securing a position where she can use her passion for helping others.



Tavanja, THP Participant



Voice Your Victory from March 14 – April 14. Celebrate your accomplishments with a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card.

voice your victories

Celebrate Your YW Achievements

Whether learning to read, learning to swim, losing weight, putting homelessness in the past, or building skills and credentials to help land a new job, people achieve amazing things at the YWCA St. Paul.

Voice Your Victories invites you—YWCA members, participants and volunteers—to share and celebrate your accomplishments. Have you changed your mind, body or life as a result of your involvement in a YWCA program or service? If so, we'd love to hear from you! From March 14 to April 14, share your story and celebrate your accomplishments. Your victory may be featured in upcoming YWCA publications and you'll have a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card.

For more information on Voice Your Victories or for a copy of the submission form, visit bit.ly/ywvictory or call Emily Richardson at (651) 265-0792.

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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
ywca

St. Paul



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