

# yw words

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**

St. Paul

For Friends, Members and the Greater St. Paul Community

Spring 2015

## joining forces for youth

### New Initiative Helps Connect Cops & Kids



*Saint Paul Police Officers have teamed up with the YWCA to build positive relationships with youth.*

This winter, the Saint Paul Police Department (SPPD) teamed up with the YWCA on a project that rewards at-risk youth for positive behavior. As part of an ongoing effort to help cops and kids build rapport, police officers are now managing the Youth Achievers Program (YAP) Store.

The initiative aims to build positive relationships today that will help build a better tomorrow. “Many of our youth are used to encountering police only in the context of stressful situations—so this is a great opportunity for them to interact on a regular basis in a safe, positive setting,” explains Danielle Taylor, Chief Program Officer at the YWCA.

Once a week officers operate the YAP Store, where they help kids tally and redeem points they’ve earned by participating in activities, completing homework assignments and demonstrating good behavior. With a generous donation from the Saint Paul Police Foundation, the store is currently stocked with a little bit of everything including snacks, hygiene products, school supplies, toys and sporting goods. Kids have the option of spending their points as they earn them or saving up for larger items.

In addition to running the store, officers also spend time playing games, helping with school assignments and simply getting to know the youth. It’s an important mission and one the officers take seriously. As Assistant Police Chief Todd Axtell explains, “When our children have a more favorable view of our police, and our police have a more favorable view of our children, we all win.”

**Our partnership with the SPPD was recently featured on WCCO. To view the segment, visit <http://cbsloc.al/13UXhi4>.**

Non - Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 446  
Twin Cities, MN

YWCA St. Paul  
375 Selby Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102-1822

# within our walls

## A Glimpse at Programming and Happenings



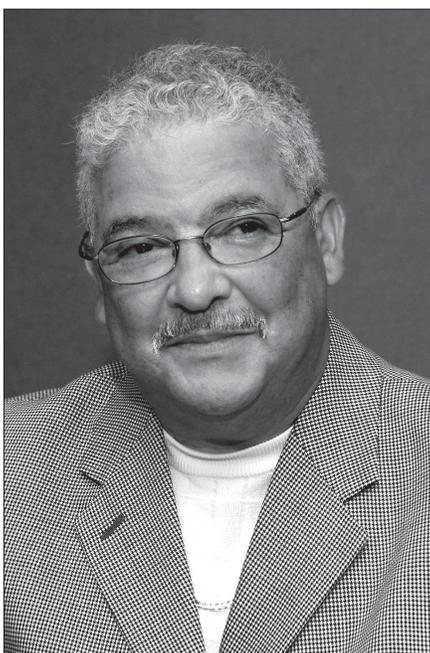
At the 2014 Holiday Wrapping Party, our members, donors and friends wrapped more than 600 gifts donated to families fighting homelessness.



During a baby shower for participants in our Transitional Housing Program, youth made gifts for their soon-to-be siblings.



This winter, our YAP space got a makeover. Volunteers from 3M painted the walls and HandsOn Twin Cities donated new furniture.



Chief Executive Officer, William L. Collins, Jr.

## embracing change

### Our Legacy Continues

As previously announced, this April, I will be retiring from my position as Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA St. Paul. After 20 years of service to the YWCA and more than 46 in the nonprofit and public sectors, this will be a significant change, but one that I am ready to embrace.

Sitting down to pen what will be my last column in these pages, I couldn't help but reflect on the many talented and passionate people who have joined me in the work of changing minds, bodies and lives. I'm proud to say I collaborated with you; I'm honored to have had your support!

Together we've had much to celebrate, the most important—working together to improve the lives of women, children and families. Whether you are a member, volunteer, donor, funder, partner or program participant, it's been my pleasure to work with you and on your behalf.

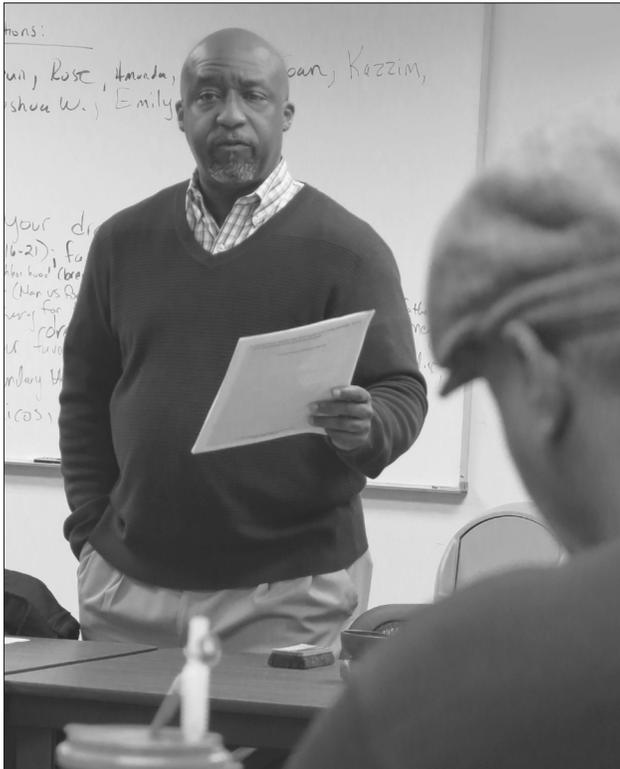
I'm proud to have played a role in advancing a mission started by a group of forward-thinking St. Paul women more than 100 years ago. As I begin this new chapter in my life, I do so knowing that with a dedicated board of directors and skilled leadership team, our legacy of excellence will continue.

Thank you for being a part of the YWCA story. It's been a privilege to share this journey with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William L. Collins, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

# widening the workforce

## New Project Breaks Barriers to Employment



*FAST 2 is helping low-income job seekers get hired.*

The YWCA St. Paul is excited to be helping provide services for a new project that's moving local job seekers into the workforce and toward self-sufficiency. Launched in January, Families Achieving Success Today (FAST 2) breaks barriers to employment for low-income Ramsey County residents.

FAST 2 serves African-American and American Indian recipients of the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) who are disabled, injured or have other barriers that are making it difficult for them to get hired.

"For parents with mental health issues, a history of family violence or a special needs child—FAST 2 makes it possible for them to address those challenges so they can also focus on becoming ready for work," explains Tom Ellis, Manager of Workforce Development at the YWCA.

With everything from job search support and financial literacy workshops to mental health screenings and domestic violence counseling, services are designed to help participants move into competitive-wage positions within the community.

As a FAST 2 partner, the YWCA facilitates culturally-specific workshops designed to help participants overcome obstacles to getting hired. These services are administered through YW Works—a program serving African-American MFIP participants.

The YWCA is thrilled to be part of this initiative and is excited to continue moving people into work and toward self-sufficiency as the project progresses.

**Sponsored by Ramsey County Workforce Solutions and led by Goodwill Easter Seals of Minnesota, FAST2 unites local service providers to help clients build their strengths and overcome barriers to employment.**

# 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 volunteers.

**The event will take place on Tuesday, May 19 at Saint Paul College on Marshall Avenue in St. Paul. To RSVP, visit [bit.ly/ywsuccess15](http://bit.ly/ywsuccess15) or call 651-265-0718.**



*Leona, an honoree at Sweet Success 2014, accepting her award.*

# celebrating success

## Making Education a Priority

Tameisha and her sons became homeless after fleeing an abusive relationship. While staying in a domestic violence shelter, the family learned they had been accepted into the YWCA's Transitional Housing Program (THP). They received the keys to their new apartment just in time for her son's fifth birthday and it was the perfect gift.

Once settled at THP, Tameisha began working with her case manager to overcome past trauma and set goals for her future. Because her abuser had stolen from her and closely controlled when and how she could spend money—Tameisha made learning to budget a top priority.

She also chose to focus on her education by working to pursue an associate degree in criminal justice. "I watched my mom struggle my whole life," Tameisha explains. "[She was] a single mother working 3 to 4 jobs, and I didn't want that to be me."

In May 2014, Tameisha earned her associate degree and the following fall, graduated from THP. Now living in an affordable rental unit in the community, she plans to continue her education and hopes to earn a bachelor's degree and achieve her goal of becoming a probation officer.

**Want to support more successes like Tameisha's or simply learn more? Visit [bit.ly/ywsuccess](http://bit.ly/ywsuccess)**



*Tameisha, THP Participant*

# voice your victory

## Celebrate Your YW Achievements



**Voice Your Victory from March 13 – April 13. Celebrate your accomplishments with a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card.**

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 Victory 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 13 to April 13, please 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 Victory or for a copy of the submission form, visit [bit.ly/ywvictory15](http://bit.ly/ywvictory15).

### YWCA Board of Directors

**Officers:**

President:  
Shawntera Hardy

Vice President:  
Mickey Moore

Treasurer:  
Tina Grant

Secretary:  
Beverly Jones Heydinger

**Members-at-Large:**

Todd Axtell  
Renee Dotson-Gill  
Kerry Geurkink  
Steve Halvorsen  
Robin Hickman  
Allen Krug  
Lisa Lissimore  
Deborah Montgomery

### Newsletter & Class Catalog Production Staff

Chief Executive Officer: William Collins, Jr.  
Managing Editor: Connie Bowers-Capen  
Editor: Darcie Moore  
Graphic Designer: Kelsey Gullickson  
Writer: Emily Richardson

This newsletter is a publication of the YWCA St. Paul. For more information on YWCA programs and services, please call (651) 222-3741 or check out our web site at [ywcaofstpaul.org](http://ywcaofstpaul.org).

This document is available in alternative formats.



YWCA St. Paul is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.



St. Paul



Community Partner