

# yw words

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

St. Paul

For Friends, Members and the Greater St. Paul Community

Winter 2015-2016

## week without violence

### Coming Together to End Domestic Abuse



*During Week Without Violence staff united to learn more about domestic abuse and how to better support our clients and community.*

This October, the YWCA St. Paul participated in YWCA USA's Week Without Violence — a national movement to end violence. The event, now in its 20th year, mobilizes people across the nation to take action to help reduce violence in our homes, workplaces and communities. This year's focus was on domestic abuse.

The statistics are sobering. In the United States, one in four women will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives, and on average, three women are murdered each day.

Although the work to support women and families recovering from the trauma of abuse is ongoing, Week Without Violence is a powerful opportunity to educate and engage.

At the YWCA St. Paul, staff from every department participated in a series of workshops designed to educate, inform and empower. In addition to learning about the impact of violence in our community, they learned how to identify domestic violence, where to refer families in crisis and how to partner with law enforcement.

"As I looked around the room, I saw people who are bookkeepers, social workers, personal trainers, youth workers, fundraisers and employment counselors," said one staff member. "It was a great reminder that despite our specific job duties, domestic violence matters to us — and that we can all play a role in helping to end it."

YWCA St. Paul would like to extend a special thank you to presenters Sam Simmons, a specialist in trauma-informed work with African American families; Sergeant David McCabe, an officer with the Family & Sexual Violence Unit of the Saint Paul Police Department; and Chief Thomas Smith of the Saint Paul Police Department.

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# within our walls

## A Glimpse at Programming and Happenings



*Our staff are super! Together they had fun and donated more than \$6,500 to the Greater Twin Cities United Way.*



*This fall, families in our Transitional Housing Program (THP) received help getting kids back to school. Every student received a free backpack loaded with school supplies!*



*Participants in our Youth Achievers Program (YAP) enjoyed packing meals at Feed My Starving Children.*

# building on a strong foundation

## Thank You for Your Support



**Gaye Adams Massey, YWCA St. Paul**  
Chief Executive Officer

Writing this, it hardly seems possible that winter is here and the holidays are just around the corner. My first months as CEO have been a whirlwind, and it's been wonderful to have the opportunity to meet with members, volunteers, funders and allies. Wherever I've gone, I've been met with incredible community support.

As I take stock of all the things for which I am grateful this season, at the very top of the list are people like you. You make it possible for homeless families to make a new start. You help at-risk youth to stay on a positive path. You empower job seekers with new skills. You inspire people to improve their health and quality of life. It's your support that changes minds, bodies and lives!

With the new year, so begins a new chapter for the YWCA St. Paul. Working to build on our strong foundation, we will undertake a comprehensive strategic planning process. Our goal is to refine our vision, increase our community impact, and further advance our mission of eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. This work is more important than ever, and we appreciate your support.

I will have much to share with you in coming months, but until then — happy holidays to you and yours.

*Gaye Adams Massey*

# home for the holidays

## Sharing the Joy of the Season with Families in Need

Last year, the holidays were extra special for Keeanna and her daughter. Better than any gift, was finally having a place to call home. Formerly homeless and living out of their car, they turned to our Permanent Supportive Housing program for help.

With ongoing supportive services and an affordable two-bedroom apartment, over the past year Keeanna has made incredible strides. She paid off old debts, secured a higher paying job and enrolled in college to pursue a degree. "I have accomplished more in the last year than in the prior three!" she exclaims.

Your generosity makes transformations like Keeanna's possible. Whether donating online, making a planned gift or setting up automated contributions via your checking account, your support will change a family's life forever.

To give online please visit <http://bit.ly/ywdonate> or call 651-222-3741.



*Keeanna and her daughter – happy and healthy thanks to donors like you.*



*At the 2014 Wrapping Party, YWCA members and friends wrapped more than 800 gifts for families fighting homelessness.*

# making the holidays merry and bright

## Join Us for the Holiday Wrapping Party

Would you like to help bring joy to families in need this holiday season? Join us for the Holiday Wrapping Party on Saturday, December 12 and we'll put your nimble fingers to good use as we wrap hundreds of gifts donated for families in need!

For weeks, the "elves" have been busily working to make holiday wishes come true. Generous members, donors and friends have provided holiday gifts and financial support to ensure there is something special under the tree for every family enrolled in YWCA Housing & Supportive Services programs.

"With amazing community support, we are able to make the holidays brighter for families fighting homelessness," explains Jaime Stampley, Director of Housing & Supportive Services. "It's wonderful to experience the generosity and see people come together to ensure families who are struggling, know the community cares."

This year's Wrapping Party will be Saturday, December 12 from 10 am to noon. To RSVP, please visit <http://bit.ly/wrappingparty15> or contact Jenna Arend at 651-265-0792.



# celebrating success

## Pursuing Learning & Growth



**Shay, Youth Development Participant**

When Shay was 10 she witnessed the murder of her mother, father and sister. Reeling from the trauma and grieving the loss of her family, she went to live with a relative.

The next few years were challenging and Shay felt herself getting off-track. "I guess you could say I went out of control," she remembers. "I started sneaking out of the house. I was going to parties. I was drinking. It was just a really bad situation." Struggling to find her footing, Shay spent several years moving between group homes and foster care.

With encouragement from her social worker, Shay came to the YWCA and enrolled in the IMPACT Program. Through IMPACT, she's gained paid work experience and so much more. "I've met awesome people here," Shay says. "The YW has given me a lot of opportunities to learn and grow."

Working as a program aide in the YWCA's Youth Achievers Program (YAP) Shay discovered a passion for youth work and thinks it may be her calling. "I want to help youth grow up and get the help they need," she explains.

Having attended 10 schools over the course of 12 years, Shay is proud to have accomplished her goal of graduating from high school on-time. She recently completed her first year of college and is looking forward to discovering what comes next. "I was stuck in misery for a long time," she says. "Now I'm out of it and I'm loving my life."

## thank you, neighbors!

These local businesses donated goods that helped us to raise more than \$6,500 for the Greater Twin Cities United Way. Funds will be used to help people in the Twin Cities to create pathways out of poverty.



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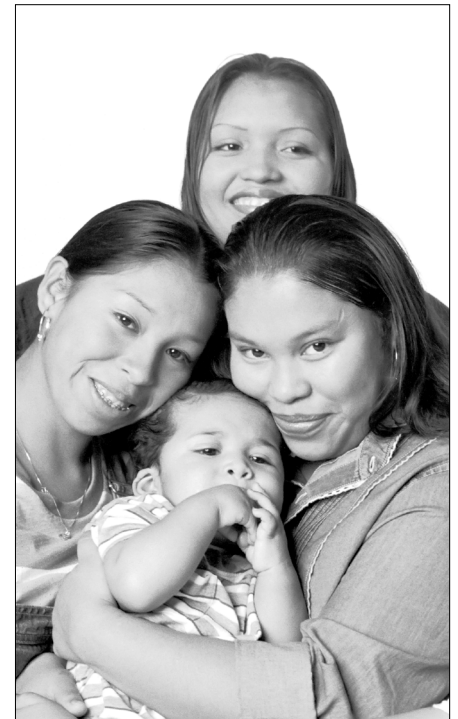
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This document is available in alternative formats.



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

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St. Paul



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