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minority health: OUR STORIES, OUR BODIES, OUR LIVES



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how to:

contribute. *She Shines* welcomes letters to the editor, articles, poetry, stories, graphics, photos and calendar events. Contact us if you have an inspiring story to tell or have a suggestion of someone to be featured. Only original contributions will be considered and may be edited due to space limitations. Include contact information including name, e-mail, address and phone number. Images provided electronically must be high-resolution.

submit cover art. The cover is reserved as a gallery of art in keeping with the *She Shines* theme. For consideration, send in a photo by e-mail attachment or mail. This is a wonderful opportunity for local artists to show their work. A biography is published in conjunction with the "Artist Canvas" section of *She Shines*.

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share
it



artist canvas

Tamara Diaz

the magical healing of art

by Monsurat Ottun / Reza Corinne Clifton

Like the colors and images found in her cover art piece, "Magic Mamas," Tamara Diaz has a lot of different influences and experiences that have painted her life. Today, she uses art in her work as a clinical therapist. Diaz recently won the Extraordinary Woman's Award for Cultural Enrichment as part of the Until the Violence STOPS: Rhode Island festival. Diaz is "very passionate about documentation, photography and seeing how different cultures and classes live, both here and in other countries." She is inspired, in part by her mother's family, who were Holocaust survivors, from her childhood and adolescence in Barcelona, Spain and New York City, and from backpacking trips through Mexico, Central America and Europe. Diaz dreams of one day traveling to her father's homeland of Cuba, which today remains restricted for American citizens. To see more of her artwork, visit www.lovelyjob.com/TamaraDiaz.



"After college, I began working at the Rape Crisis Center and at a group home for teenage girls. I continued to get my Masters of Social Work, and then my Independent License, which was a good move since there are many Spanish-speaking people who need help, and not so many Spanish-speaking clinicians. At my full time job, I do home visits all over Rhode Island and work on the Bilingual team. I also work out of the office and work primarily with Latino clients doing therapy to address mental health issues, behavior and emotional issues and trauma. I am very passionate about my work and feel blessed to be able to help others."
- Tamara Diaz, artist and clinical therapist



minority health

our stories, our bodies, our lives

from the
editor

by Reza Corinne Clifton, guest editor

The room was humming with voices and filled with a variety of colors – as you would expect at a conference that’s attracted hundreds. But as introductions began and the next speaker took the stage, the crowd became quiet; I was in the audience that day, among those who became transfixed. It was January 28, 2010, and it was the annual Health Action “Grassroots” Conference held by the national health advocacy organization, Families USA.

In a demeanor completely absent of histrionics, Congresswoman Donna Edwards, a Representative from Maryland, told the audience her own health story. It is one that starts with a career shift and corresponding inability to pay for COBRA, the temporary health insurance provided by certain employers after a person has lost his or her job. While able to acquire insurance for her son, “I crossed my fingers,” she says as what she chose for herself. Eventually she felt sick; in fact “sicker and sicker,” she recalled, until the day she passed out at a grocery store to then be rushed to the Emergency Room.

In some ways she was lucky, she describes, because there was no withholding of treatment in relation to her insurance status. But that luck would

soon run out as thousands of dollars in hospital bills arrived, followed by debates about which bills to pay and, eventually, the foreclosure notices. “My personal experience shows,” concludes Edwards, “what we might have today, we might not have tomorrow.” Or the day after that, as was clear from her journey to medical and financial recovery represented in her visible presence and stature that day.

Later in the conference, during a presentation I gave on how to spread the message on “advancing health equity,” I reminded the group about Congresswoman Edwards’ remarks, and what it meant in the context of my presentation. I inform them about how unlikely it was for the Congresswoman’s story to be heard on an even larger scale due to the underrepresentation of women and people of color on influential media programming, such as Sunday morning political talk shows on TV. Even the growing interest in President Obama and the First Lady has not curbed what one research group (Media Matters for America) calls this “overwhelmingly white and overwhelmingly male” trend.

Women and people of color: We have to tell our own stories. That is why we took the time in this

issue to connect with a variety of community health workers, a trusted health reporter, and those working closely in neighborhoods and community centers. They have their own stories or know the heartbreaking version of others, and it informs and inspires their work. We pay a tribute to these women, as well as to a fallen friend, Dana Wright, who may have left this world, but who in life left her mark.

Enjoy our 3rd annual edition and be in touch if you have a story to share. *Minority Health: Our Stories, Our Bodies, Our Lives.*

Reza Corinne Clifton is a two-time recipient of the Metcalf Diversity in the Media Award, which is given annually by Rhode Island for Community and Justice for published works and journalism projects that “engage and educate the public in ways that build awareness of diversity.” She was recognized for work that appeared on her flagship website, RezaRitesRi.com, including for a multimedia project called Rhode 2 Africa, which looked at African immigrants and first-generation Americans of African heritage who lived in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. She is also a freelance editor, media producer and music DJ. To see more of her work and to follow her projects, visit www.VenusSings.com, www.LsisStorm.com and www.UrbanHealthWatch.net. To reach Clifton, e-mail rezaclif@gmail.com. *Photo courtesy of Clifton.*

express yourself

The theme for the summer edition is raising sexually healthy children. For details on how to submit content to *She Shines*, see page 2.

trust it

eliminating racism
empowering women
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Periodically, *She Shines* includes a guest editor in order to increase the diversity of voices inside the publication. For Spring, just in time for April’s Minority Health Awareness Month, we focused on Minority Health. And Reza Corinne Clifton is back. Her experience on the topic is evident. She has pulled together a capable team of writers and resources from within our community - some familiar and some new. You will notice that the Rhode Island Office of Minority Health is included in “on the rhode”, highlighting their first in a series of Equity Dialogues for 2010. All of these collaborations are appreciated. Readers, your comments are welcome too. Contact *She Shines* at info@sheshines.org.

Share it. Trust it. Smile.

Lisa

Lisa Piscatelli, editor



smile

thumbs up



G. Gail Davis, coach/athlete/educator, was presented the Wheeler Community Spirit Award for 2010 at the SICA Potluck and Community Spirit Award Presentation.



In a unanimous vote, the full Senate voted to confirm President Obama’s nomination of Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson to a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit.

Photos by Agapao Productions.

more than able to make Rhode Island healthier advocates, Aleatha Dickerson and Dana Wright

by Reza Corinne Clifton

In 2008 and 2009, writer and community activist, Dana Wright, wrote instructive and engaging articles for *She Shines*' Minority Health editions. Her intellect, curiosity and sense of humanity were palpable in each word she delivered and in each question she answered in print, making her contributions not only important but also accessible and engaging. Therefore, it was with sadness and a sense of the magnanimous loss that we received the news in December 2009 – of Wright's premature passing. Signaling what could have been the end of an era, here at *She Shines* we decided to continue with her fight in the field of disability awareness, inclusive representation and equal rights for all.

The question of how to do this did not linger for long thanks to a diverse group of individuals who work with the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH). The Minority Health Advisory Committee (MHAC) is a group originally formed after the creation of HEALTH's Office of Minority Health, according to Aleatha Dickerson, one of the co-chairs of MHAC. Their work is "about what they can do to improve things for minorities," she says, "because of documented cases of disparities."

Dickerson's value to the group is clear. As a former pathology technologist at a blood bank, Dickerson has an insider's view of what the various steps in healthcare delivery look like. She also knows what it's like to represent and build with an underserved community. As an active member of the Chappaquiddick Wampanoags, a Native American tribe part of the regional "Wampanoag Nation," and as a graduate student, says Dickerson, "I did bring information and set up at a lot of the different Pow Wow's." She earned a Master's degree from the University of Rhode Island in 2001.

But Dickerson also knows what it's like to be your own advocate. After experiencing a near-fatal allergic reaction in 1987, Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, Dickerson lost most of her sight, ultimately ending up

blind. "It was traumatic and life-changing," says Dickerson, and not just due to her vision problems. She ended up in intensive care then a burn unit, "because my skin was burned," she explains. "I also had a lot of scarring in the eyes, and that was very painful."

You would not know it today if you were at a meeting with her or conversing over the phone, but it took Dickerson 5-6 months after being released from the hospital before she sought help for "mobility training" and "daily living" skills. "They say you go through a grieving process," said Dickerson during the interview. "I got through it with the support of my husband and family." She and her husband have one daughter and three sons; at the time, their oldest child was 13 and their youngest was 8. "I wanted to step back into the role of mom," she explains.

Dickerson lives in Providence, where she also raised her children. She credits the "ethnic diversity" in her neighborhood as one of the factors that helped her children adjust to changes in their mother. She also says she "exposed" her children "to people with a variety of disabilities." Dickerson did this by regularly taking them with her when she had appointments at "independent living centers." But she also credits Wright.

"Dana grew up with my children," says Dickerson. "She was part of the kids in the neighborhood and they included her. They respected her for who she was." Reflecting further she says, "They really looked up to her."

Still effected by Wright's departure, yet impressed by both women's unyielding willingness to stand and advocate for themselves and others, *She Shines* sends a tribute and thanks to both the fallen Dana Wright and the powerful Aleatha Dickerson. They both show that, not only is life beyond a disability possible, but so is a life dedicated to making way for a healthier Rhode Island overall. ❖❖❖

Aleatha Dickerson is co-chair of the Minority Health Advisory Committee. To learn more, contact the Office of Minority Health at 222-2901. Organizations Dickerson utilizes for services, referrals, or in-home services include: Ocean State Center for Independent Living, www.oscil.org; The Rhode Island Indian Council, www.rhodeislandindiancouncil.org; and Rhode Island Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 421-7005, 421-7016 (TDD), 272-8090 (Spanish). She also recommends the state's Office of Rehabilitative Services for people with disabilities looking for vocational programs and job-related opportunities, www.ors.state.ri.us.



Photos courtesy of Dickerson and Clifton.



colleague, mentor, friend

Born in June 1983, doctors diagnosed Dana Wright with Marfan's Syndrome, a health condition known to attack all of the body's tissues. As an early adolescent, Wright started using a wheelchair to aid her with navigating the halls of her high school and to keep her stamina during longer distances or sessions requiring frequent movements. Shocked by the absence of resources for people with physical disabilities, and faced with a new set of barriers in relation to accessing buildings, sidewalks, entrances and exits, Wright began working on disability awareness and access issues in high school, and continued as a student at Rhode Island College. Wright's untimely death in December 2009 came several months after she had launched a new disability awareness project that was engaging a whole new demographic: a children's book and series called "Rolling with Nia" about an everyday African American girl who happens to use a wheel chair. The series was to be based on her experience of growing up and never seeing "a character with disabilities in children's books or on TV" or ever seeing kids with disabilities treated "as normal." She was on a mission to redefine normal, and "Rolling with Nia" was one of her tools.

Source: Reza Rites and WGBH. To learn more about Wright's life and book, visit www.wgbh.org, the online program "Basic Black."

sharing vital information

Vinnie Velazquez talks HIV prevention

by Grace M. Rivera

After more than 25 years since the AIDS virus became known worldwide, it continues to threaten the health and well-being of many in the United States. In the Latino community, many believe that HIV/AIDS is one of the most urgent health problems facing the nation today.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the rate of new HIV infections among Hispanics/Latinos was 2.5 times higher than that of whites and 17% of all new HIV infections occurring in the United States in the year 2006. For women, it's especially worrying. According to the federal Office of Minority Health (OMH), "Hispanic females are almost five times as likely to have AIDS in 2006 as white females."

As their evidence shows, there is a problem that's been developing for years. Yet resources for HIV care and prevention have not kept pace with the disease's ravaging effect on Latinos and, for example, African Americans – who accounted for almost half of all HIV/AIDS cases in 2007 according to OMH researchers. This mismatch, between the scope of the problem and the impact of funding, has affected prevention and care – important tools to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Particularly troublesome is knowing that services often don't reach those who need them most, says Vinnie Velazquez, a community health worker with extensive experience in health-related and social service programs.

Velazquez is the prevention director at MAP Alcohol & Drug Rehab in Rhode Island, a shelter and addiction recovery center in Providence. She knows personally what it's like to not receive vital information. "When I was much younger," says Velazquez, "I was homeless for a short period and this experience allowed me to see firsthand how the destitute and down-trodden are ignored by those who are supposed to help them."

She later returned home and after "many life struggles," completed her education and became a health advocate. Today, she is a doctoral candidate at Cambridge College. Velazquez also continues to work on issues of health, community outreach, and reaching vulnerable populations. At "Clínica Esperanza – Hope Clinic – A place to be healthy," her work supports children and adults residing in Rhode Island who don't have health insurance or can't otherwise afford it, by providing free medical and preventive health services.

Velazquez has also applied her expertise to the area of HIV/AIDS.

She is a strong advocate for educating people and providing resources for testing and, therefore, early detection of HIV. Velazquez says there is an overwhelming amount of studies on HIV/AIDS, but Latinos usually learn they have the disease when it is full blown AIDS. In her mind, then, the studies do not serve their purpose if they do not reach those who might get infected, educate those who are already suffering from it and prompt regular testing.

Another one of her contributions has been bringing together various agencies that provide HIV/AIDS services to work together, to fight existing and persisting stigmas – the myths, fears, misunderstandings and false information frequently shared on the topic. One strategy she notes is investing in and partnering with organizations beyond HIV/AIDS providers and health departments, for example corporate, media, and faith-based entities and others. She also says HIV/AIDS stigma must be addressed through the development and launch of social marketing campaigns targeting Latinos and Latino-specific factors and complemented by anti-stigma, community-based interventions. This has prompted Velazquez to work in several capacities together with agencies such as Progreso Latino, Rhode

Learn about the Community Health Worker Association of RI, by e-mailing CommunityHealthWorkerRI@gmail.com. The organization's mission is to "Increase the capacity, recognition and effectiveness of Rhode Island's community health workers to promote health equity, reduce disparities, and increase access to high quality health services."

Island Red Cross and the Center for Substance Abuse.

"I want to make others aware that we have to eliminate the stigma of this disease, especially in our Latino communities," says Velazquez, where "still in the 21st Century, many families don't talk about sex." She says it's either because they feel ashamed or because they believe it's a conversation strictly for the bedroom.

But Velazquez is talking, and she doesn't plan to stop. "Health saved my life" and in return, she says, "I'll be the voice for those who otherwise cannot advocate for themselves."

To learn more about national rates and prevention for HIV/AIDS, visit www.cdc.gov/hiv or visit www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov and search HIV/AIDS. Learn more about testing and prevention in Rhode Island and resources for parents, teachers, kids and providers at www.health.ri.gov/hiv.



Vinnie Velazquez, community health worker
Photo by Agapao Productions.

Grace M. Rivera is a diversity associate in the Office of Diversity at Lifespan. She writes for the department's newsletter. To contact her directly, e-mail grivera@lifespan.org.



Photo courtesy of Lifespan.

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Barbara Morse Silva is a health reporter at NBC 10. To see her Health Check reports, visit www.turnto10.com.

Photo courtesy of WJAR - NBC 10.



keeping Rhode Islanders healthy one newscast at a time

issues dear to Barbara Morse Silva's heart

by Raymonde M. Charles

Many in the medical field and larger Rhode Island community believe that Barbara Morse Silva, as health reporter for NBC 10, is also a registered nurse. Several years ago, Silva was to give a speech at a local hospital and was introduced as "Barbara Morse, RN." Taking it all in stride, Silva joked that the "RN" in this case stood for "respected news person."

Silva has been a journalist for about 30 years and is a three-time Emmy Award nominee. She started her career in journalism as an intern on radio then on television, and has worked as a reporter in Hawaii, Arizona, Illinois and Massachusetts. She came to Rhode Island from WISH-TV in Indianapolis, where prior to becoming a reporter, she was an on-air intern at the station. It was "back when they let interns on the air," she recalls.

"Joining NBC 10" and covering health "is one of those accidental good things that happened to me," said Silva. "When I was asked to become the health reporter at NBC 10, I said sure, I have enough health elements." Silva brought more than her professionalism, talent and passion to the field of health reporting when joining the station in 1995; she has her own diagnoses of asthma and allergies.

With each newscast, Silva's goal is to empower men and women to take charge of their health by providing them with pertinent facts and updates. Silva said, "I feel like I am the clearinghouse for a lot of information; I throw things out there about diseases and treatments. Mind you, I never endorse any treatment or any new products or anything. I just simply let people know what is available." She also helps to clarify myths and misconceptions.

"Women think that breast cancer is the biggest threat to their health but heart disease," says Silva "is the number one killer of women in the U.S." And the symptoms can be different between men and women. "Women," reports Silva, "may not get the crushing chest pain when they are having a heart attack. They might get jaw pain or pain in the

shoulder or in the upper back, or they might feel nauseous."

Some of Silva's "Health Check" reports hit even closer to home. "Anytime I do stories on asthma, allergies, diabetes and mental health it is personal to me," says Silva. "While I do not have diabetes my dad does, which puts me at higher risk." In addition, she shares, "News stories on mental health issues are also near and dear to my heart because my mother had a bipolar disorder." Silva says her mother died as a result of her mental illness.

"Thankfully, these days they know how to diagnosis it. However, she was misdiagnosed [back then]. She was diagnosed as having chronic depression, but they did not see the manic side of her." Silva is encouraged that medical advances in the field of mental health have improved the diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses; however, she continues to be concerned about the lack of access to mental health services.

Silva is concerned about health access in general, and about the difficulties minorities and the uninsured face in receiving health care. She says she has talked to many viewers who said they were denied medical tests because they did not have health insurance, and says what does exist is "a fragmented health care system."

"The system does not provide fair and equal access and treatment to all," declares Silva, which is why "health care reform is needed." But first, she says, "we need to fix the existing system [because] it is hard to reform something that is broken. Instead of putting on a Band-aid, we need to dig deep and fix the broken system and then reform it."

In addition to broadening access to care, Silva hopes that changes in the health care system will improve doctor-patient relations. She points to research on provider biases as helpful tools for educating physicians and patients on their sub-conscious views and prejudices, and says these revelations can improve the identification and treatment

of illnesses in people of all races and nationalities.

Silva is on a mission to help people enjoy healthier lives. She encourages people to engage and participate in their health care, and urges her viewers to be more than just passive recipients of care. Referring back to heart disease, Silva says women should know what a heart attack looks like or feels like in a woman, and they should be "active" and "proactive" in their health. To all her viewers she advises: "be the best advocate for your health" because "you know your body better than anyone else."

"You should go to your doctor's appointments with a list of questions," she advises, and "if you are not happy with what you are hearing, you should seek a second opinion. Your life may be on the line," says Silva, "do not worry about hurting anyone's feelings."

Silva says we all have "gut feelings" that tell us when "something is not right here," and she says we should listen to them. But more than that, remarks Silva, "I want to help motivate people to have regular doctor's visits, to exercise and to eat healthier and smaller portions."

"I am touched even if [only] one person calls to say, 'oh my God, the light bulb went off [after watching a Health Check report]," says Silva, "I researched it more and talked to my doctor and that is what I have." ❖❖❖

Raymonde M. Charles is the communications coordinator at Rhode Island KIDS COUNT and a member of the Annie E. Casey Foundation National KIDS COUNT Steering Committee. She has been actively involved in several national and community organizations including Voices for America's Children, the United Way of Rhode Island, Providence After School Alliance, Young Voices, Youth in Action and the Elmwood Church of God. Charles is also a senior at Rhode Island College.

Photo by Agapao Productions.



family and culture

Kormasa Traub observes a growing interest in health

by Margaret E. Thomas

To anyone who knows Kormasa Traub's background it is not a surprise that she is interested in health issues, and in the health of the African community in Rhode Island in particular. According to Traub, she comes from a "family of nurses." You see, her mother is a nurse practitioner, an aunt is a nurse, her father works in a hospital, and her sister is soon to be a pharmacist.

She is also the daughter of Liberian immigrants, and a first generation American raised in Rhode Island.

From her family, she's learned the "passion and compassion" to help people with health issues, and to recognize cultural trends. For example, says Traub, in the immigrant community, she often sees confusion and lack of knowledge regarding diseases and disease prevention, proper use of medication and general lack of knowledge regarding health issues.

At home growing up, Traub says her mom stressed fresh fruit and vegetables and exercise, but many other families don't get the same knowledge. She envisions community programs like partnerships between Johnson & Wales and area African restaurants, where community members can learn how to cook more nutritious meals with healthy substitutions such as olive oil instead of palm oil, which is the more common yet healthier ingredient within many traditional recipes. And with more than 75,000 Africans living in Rhode Island, she feels the interest is there.

She also now has first-hand evidence to back up her belief.

Recently Traub worked with African Alliance of Rhode Island (and me) on a series of focus groups designed to understand how Africans perceive health issues. "What surprised me about the focus groups is that people were so interested in health issues," shared Traub, reflecting on her experience. "We thought they felt health was not important,

but they are very interested."

Traub graduates from Rhode Island College in May with a degree in Communications, and the desire to create documentaries on Africans in America. "My generation," says Traub, "is more 'Americanized' and we talk about the importance of education and health. We're concerned with quality of life and lifestyle issues like marriage and STDs."

And lessons learned through the focus groups? "I was happy to know that people are interested in health," but still bothered that "they didn't know how or where to go. It kind of broke my heart," laments Traub. Yet Traub says the confusion comes from lack of knowledge.

"And we can change that," she concludes.

Kormasa Traub, health advocate

For more about African Alliance of Rhode Island and their community health focus groups, call 331-5535.

For more about the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, contact Carol Hall-Walker, MPA, chief program administrator of the Community, Family Health & Equity Division at Rhode Island Department Health, 222-2589.

Margaret E. Thomas is the president of Strategic Marketing, a marketing and communications professional specializing in health care, business to business and consumer services. Currently, she provides marketing, market research, communications and public relations services to such diverse clients as the Rhode Island Department of Health; Substance Abuse Prevention Task Forces; QualityMetric; and the Neurosurgery Foundation. She also works with African Alliance of Rhode Island, and served as moderator of their recent health-related focus groups.

Photos by Agapao Productions.



8th Annual Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon

Presented by: **women's center** of rhode island

Pre-Awards Cocktail Reception with Denise Brown

When: Thursday, May 6, 2010, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Where: The Hi-Hat Lounge, 3 Davol Square

Tickets: \$100 per person, \$150 for two

*Limited tickets available for this exclusive VIP meet & greet.

Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon

When: Friday, May 7, 2010, 11:30am to 1:30pm

Where: Providence Marriott, 1 Orms St.

Keynote Speaker: Denise Brown, sister of Nicole Brown Simpson

Tickets: \$60 per person

*Ticket price will be \$75 after April 22nd.

All profits will go to Women's Center of Rhode Island, a shelter for women and children that are victims of domestic violence.

Contact Barbara Lee 401-861-2761 x134



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practicing and maintaining healthy teeth

an inside look at dentistry with Dr. Brandie Ard

by Monsurat Ottun

Brandie Ard, DDS is one of the few, young black female dentists in Rhode Island. Though not originally from the Ocean State, Dr. Ard has recently poured her heart and soul into work at Blackstone Valley Community Health Care (BVCHC) Dental Clinic, servicing the underserved families in the Pawtucket and Central Falls areas.

Dr. Ard describes working at BVCHC Dental Clinic as giving her a sense of pride. Beyond being able to serve the patients that the clinic caters to, Dr. Ard has met other dentists through her co-workers, and has become a part of the Rhode Island Dental Association. As part of maintaining an active license, Dr. Ard also continues to get continuing education credit.

Only 28 years old and originally from Louisiana, Ard made her way to Rhode Island via a National Health Service Corps (NHSC) scholarship she earned while in dental school.

To support her studies at Meharry Medical College, School of Dentistry, Dr. Ard was selected for a NHSC scholarship, a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-supported “competitive program that pays tuition, fees and provides a living stipend to students enrolled in accredited medical, dental, nurse practitioner, certified nurse midwife and physician assistant training,” according to information on the program’s website. Like other recipients, in exchange for the support received during dental school, Dr. Ard agreed to work in an underserved area.

Dr. Ard interviewed at three other places before she chose to work with the Dental Clinic in Pawtucket. She says it is a place where she gets to work with other dentists and where clients are required to be patients of the BVCHC medical clinic in order to receive treatment at the dental clinic.

It’s been a year and a half since she’s worked there, and Dr. Ard recognizes ways in which the Dental Clinic stands out. For one, she says, the people in the clinic are diverse. For instance, the staff consists of dentists, dental assistants, hygienists and administrators “that are Indian, Asian, Cape Verdean, Puerto Rican, White, Portuguese and Black.”

Although most of the patients they treat are Hispanic, she continues, BVCHC also sees a large number of Cape Verdeans and Caucasians. Represented in smaller numbers are African Americans.

Working in the Public Health arena, Dr. Ard

says she can’t help but notice, “as Black people, we do not go as often as we should to the dentist.” While many may choose to ignore a simple toothache or another simple oral health concern for fear of the fees, the longer anyone waits when they have a problem “the worse it can become,” and the more a family will have to pay in the long run for not treating the initial signs of pain, says Dr. Ard. “Maintenance and prevention are very important,” and in the long-term, “less costly.”

Many patients will either try to seek other services or will stop going to the dentist altogether. However, a lot of the patients that Dr. Ard sees are self-paying and don’t have insurance; with the sliding fee that the clinic has, many end up only paying \$10 for a checkup.

Unfortunately, remarked Dr. Ard, the declining economy has affected BVCHC like other businesses statewide, causing serious budget cuts and the elimination of certain services. Moreover, with the money the clinic does receive, they have to determine where to allocate their funds based on greatest need.

But cutbacks also affect whether people choose to receive services. For example, says Dr. Ard, a lot of people who need the dental work cannot afford to pay even though the clinic offers a sliding fee scale. She sees this in the context of a larger problem, with lots of places no longer accepting government healthcare like Medicaid.

Oral hygiene at home is also a part of taking care of your mouth. Going to the dentist is only one part of it. Of course watch what you eat and make sure to brush and floss twice a day, use mouthwash when feasible, and be mindful of giving kids too much sugar, like soda, sugar pops, etc. All of these tips will help protect your teeth and preserve your oral health, while too much sugar can lead to dental problems.

While sensitive to today’s financial realities, Dr. Ard recommends that everyone “save money” for their “regular six-month cleaning” and check up. And true to the phrase “practice what you preach,” Dr. Ard goes for her own dental visits regularly.

Dr. Ard says she also makes sure to floss on a regular basis and is “constantly” looking in her own mouth “because of what I see every day.” But it’s no wonder that Dr. Ard is determined to set a good example; she’s always known that she wanted to be a dentist, even as a child. Dr. Ard says she loved going to the dentist, par-



ticularly visiting with her office’s hygienist.

Nevertheless, she decided while in college that she was going to continue pursuing the higher degree and stuck with dentistry. Her decision led her to Meharry’s School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tennessee, and to one of the two dentistry schools at a historically black college or university (HBCU); the other school is located at Howard University. Dr. Ard credits this as one of the reasons she had many mentors, including professors that she could look up to and whose examples she could follow.

Dr. Ard has never regretted her decision to become a dentist, even after reflecting on her childhood hygienist as being “really, really nice.” She also loves working for underserved groups, explaining, “People are so much more appreciative in the public health setting.” She hopes to stay with the National Health Service Corp for another year, and says she can’t see herself working in a private office. On the other hand, Dr. Ard does admit that she has had some trouble adjusting to Rhode Island, and she may be looking ahead.

One of the things she finds “a little difficult” at times is being referred to by her patients as “the black dentist,” but in a derogatory manner. But Dr. Ard says she doesn’t allow it to take over the sense of pride she feels for what she does, because at the end of the day, she loves it. “My passion and love for the work I do outweighs being called the ‘black dentist.’”

Besides, “At the end of the day, I’m a damn good ‘black dentist!’”

For more information about Blackstone Valley Community Health Care and the BVCHC Dental Clinic, visit www.blackstonechc.org.

Monsurat Ottun works for a nonprofit organization called New Roots Providence, whose mission is to build the capacity of smaller organizations through free trainings, technical assistance and grants. She is also a poet, aspiring entrepreneur, and future legal activist who is inspired by the women that pass on the right to dream by being true to their calling and natural selves. She regularly performs as a spoken word poet with a collective of female artists and writers who call themselves Isis Storm.



Lourdes Pichardo, bilingual master teacher in chronic diseases

Photo by Agapao Productions.

from piggy banks to health education

chronic giving with Lourdes Pichardo

by Reza Corinne Clifton

Hearing Lourdes Pichardo talk about her family is a lot like receiving a geography lesson on the Dominican Republic. First, Pichardo was born in Santiago – the second largest city in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean nation. The first largest city is the capital, Santo Domingo, where Pichardo spent some of her childhood. She lived for nine years in Tamboril, which is where her father is originally from, and her mother is from a city called Licey, where she also lived for 8 months.

Currently she lives and works in Rhode Island after a series of moves and transitions like those described above. Ask her to recount how the changes happen and you may find her teary and saddened or smiling and proud; it depends on where in the story she is. There is the time she was separated from her father and mother for more than a year as part of the family's emigration to the United States,

and the fact that Pichardo supported the process by keeping a piggy bank to go toward the move. There is the time she drove her friend for a job opportunity and was among those selected for the openings after returning as an adult to the Dominican Republic. Then there is the year she and her husband moved back to the states in search of optimum treatment for a daughter then-recently diagnosed with Leukemia. In addition to the challenge of caring for a sick child, Pichardo's choice also meant leaving behind her mother, who was sick with cancer.

Upon returning to the U.S., Pichardo began working in fields dedicated to community and social service. Early on she opened a home childcare business to follow her interests in early learning, while later she did programming with the Providence School Department, and for Rhode Island PBS. In the meantime, Pichardo's brother, who lived in New Jersey,

became diagnosed and very sick with diabetes. Two years after him, Pichardo was diagnosed too.

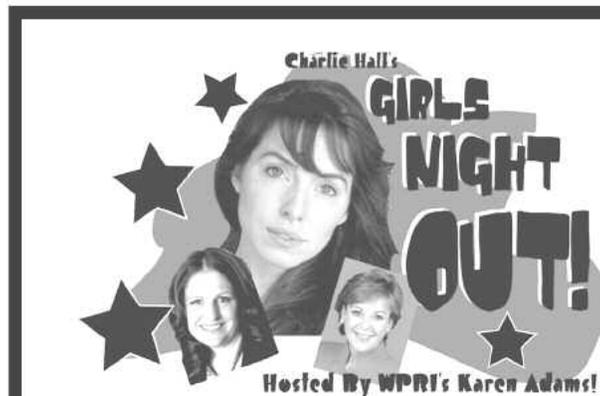
Pichardo used their diagnoses to jump-start her education on the topic of diabetes; she began by becoming a diabetes information resources education specialist with the Rhode Island Department of Health. Today, she shares her knowledge through the "Chronic Disease Self Management Workshop," a model pioneered by Stanford University in California. As a bilingual master teacher in chronic diseases, she says, she facilitates workshops that bring together doctors and community members to discuss asthma, heart disease, arthritis and diabetes.

In Spanish the classes are called Tomando Control de Su Salud, which literally means 'taking control of your health.' It is just one of many areas she hopes to teach from her book of life lessons, no matter what the setting is.



learn to live healthier and feel better

Living Well Rhode Island Chronic Disease Self Management Workshops are highly participative. Mutual support and success build participants' confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives. If you have asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis or another chronic disease, this free workshop is for you. You will learn: how to manage your symptoms, how to communicate effectively with your doctor, how to lessen your frustration, how to fight fatigue, how to make daily tasks easier and how to get more out of life. Workshops are for anyone who has one or more chronic conditions. A friend, caregiver or relative is welcome to attend with you. Workshops are offered in Spanish and English. Registration and workshops are ongoing. Check on the schedule and location of workshops by calling 222-7623.



This year's headliner hails from LA and has been labeled as one of Variety's 10 Hot Comics to Watch. She's Whitney Cummings and you might remember her screamingly hysterical set on the Joan Rivers Roast ("Loved you in the Wrestler!") She has a new album out, and is a regular on Chelsea Lately.

WPRI's spontaneously combustible Karen Adams emceeds the evening in her usual breezy style. We proudly welcome back Mary Ellen DePetrillo to the stage. A few more surprise comics will round out an evening that is sure to boast its fourth straight sell-out! *Adult content/language

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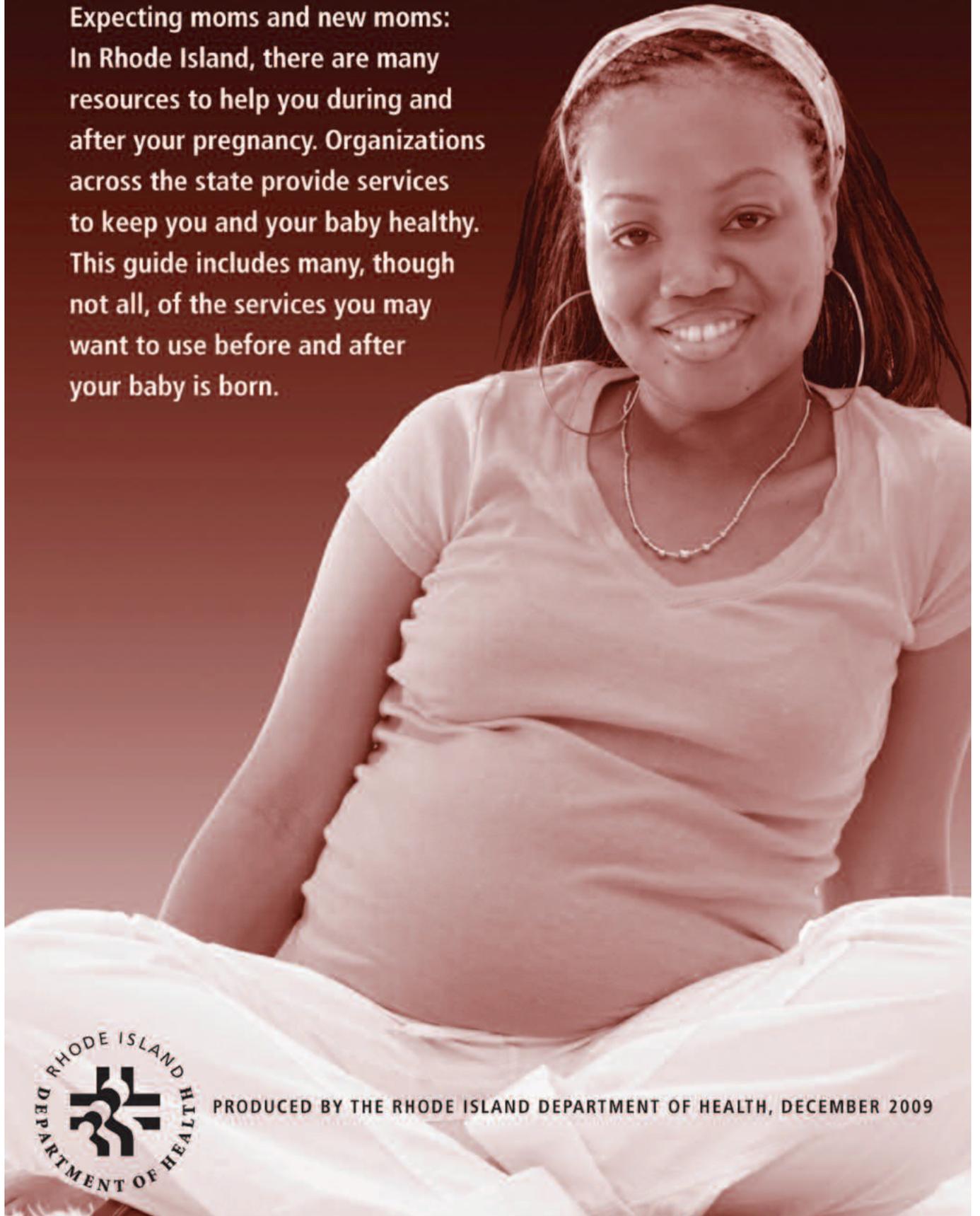
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To receive the Women's Health Resource Guide, call the Office of Women's Health at 222-4655.

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESOURCE GUIDE

What services are available to help you, your newborn and your family?

Expecting moms and new moms: In Rhode Island, there are many resources to help you during and after your pregnancy. Organizations across the state provide services to keep you and your baby healthy. This guide includes many, though not all, of the services you may want to use before and after your baby is born.



PRODUCED BY THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, DECEMBER 2009



Photos from left, the community participants are Alberto Perez, Eleanor Borge and Nicole Pope.

let's talk equity dialogue

Minority Health Advisory Committee holds annual meeting

In Rhode Island, 20% of the population is a racial/ethnic minority. The Minority Health Advisory Committee's priorities for 2010 include: 1) Promote health equity and continue to integrate elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities across all Health programs by providing information, education and training to Rhode Island communities on health indicators, health outcomes, and social determinants of health. 2) Continue supporting the implementation of the CLAS Standards in health care settings across Rhode Island. 3) Promote the translation of research into practice to help Health and partners stay focused on health equity.



Over 100 people attended the Minority Health Advisory Committee Annual Meeting on February 12 at the Rhode Island Department of Administration. The meeting was the first in a series of equity dialogues planned for 2010. Included in the presentation was the committee's 2010 priorities, the new Health Equity Framework and data from the updated Minority Health Fact Sheets. In raising awareness of health disparities, a call to action was made. Some in the audience suggested more efforts need to be done for the community to understand what they can do on a local level.



Photos clockwise, Dr. David R. Gifford, director Rhode Island Department of Health; Ana Novais, executive director Division of Community, Family Health and Equity; Rilwan Feyisitan, chief Office of Minority Health; Julie Rawlings, co-chair Minority Health Advisory Committee; Aleatha Dickerson, co-chair Minority Health Advisory Committee; standing personnel from various divisions of the Rhode Island Department of Health; community advocates; and Carrie Bridges, team lead Health Disparities and Access to Care Team.

Photos by Deborah L. Perry.



Elizabeth Guillen is a sophomore at Rhode Island College majoring in Psychology, Chemical Dependency/Addiction Studies, and minoring in Sociology. She has been an intern at nriAHEC since July, 2007.

Photo by Agapao Productions.



Look for signs of lead in peeling and chipping paint, in pottery, crystal and ceramic dishes, and in residences built prior to 1978. Learn more about lead safety and lead poisoning, by visiting www.health.ri.gov/lead or call nriAHEC at 356-4077.

jumping into public health outreach experience with nriAHEC

by Elizabeth Guillen

My internship at the Northern Rhode Island Area Health Center (nriAHEC) first began in the summer of 2007. At the time, I was enrolled in a youth summer program at Family Resources, an organization in Woonsocket whose work includes developing six-week internships designed to expose youth to different careers. I was very nervous at first because most of my other friends were going on group internships, and I was going to be placed at the nriAHEC office on my own. Today, I am glad that I decided to take initiative and follow through with the internship.

Initially, I was unclear about the purpose of nriAHEC's work. On day one, seeing that I was visibly anxious, Yvette Mendez, the executive director, greeted me with a warm smile and assured me that everything would be fine. As the days went on, I adjusted and began understanding the mission of nriAHEC, and its emphasis on the healthcare workforce and minority health issues.

The mission of nriAHEC is to "foster academic, training, and community collaborations that benefit the public by improving the supply and distribution of a high quality, culturally sensitive, interdisciplinary work force that transcends barriers and supplies people with the care they deserve." The organization is part of the network of National Area Health Education Centers and Programs first developed by Congress in 1971 "to recruit, train and retain a health professions workforce committed to underserved populations." At nriAHEC, we do it through community outreach, and by connecting students to careers, providers to communities and communities to better health options.

As I said my final goodbye's after that first

summer, I remember feeling sad; I didn't want it to end. I had acquired many new skills during my short internship and had met many new faces. Little did I know that a couple months later, I would get an e-mail from Mendez asking me to return.

Thrilled when I received it, I accepted the offer. Since then, I have been coming back periodically to nriAHEC for additional internships. There is always something to do at nriAHEC, and never a dull day.

Because it is a small office with lots of responsibilities, each time I intern at nriAHEC, I am exposed to a growing network of contacts. Yet not only is it a variety of people that I am exposed to, but different careers and opportunities too. Take a project I ran in the summer of 2009.

At the time, I worked on a project called 'Safe Teen' that dealt with Teen Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's), something of interest to me because researchers are noting that teen pregnancy rates are on the rise again for the first time in 15 years. Under Safe Teen, I surveyed teens and parents, all of whom, in the end, I found to be mostly honest and candid. One result of the survey showed that 99% of teens wish that they had better access to sexual education materials, and many felt like they could not speak to their parents about sex. I walked away from the project with the assertion and supporting evidence that sexual education for teens is something that needs to be addressed so that teen pregnancy and STI's do not become an epidemic, and so that we can assure that all teens are safe.

Another project, which I finished more recently, addresses lead safety. What is the problem? Many houses built before 1978 have lead paint, and if the paint in these houses is not properly taken care of, it

can pose significant health hazards. According to available research on the topic, one out of every eleven children in the U.S. has dangerous levels of lead in their bloodstream. The worse part is that many of these children do not have or appear with visible symptoms; therefore they don't get treated until damage is done, often irreversible.

In response to lead safety needs in the Northern Rhode Island area, nriAHEC conducted outreach in collaboration with Thundermist Health Center. The objective was to inform the population on the dangers of lead poisoning – through workshops, door-to-door campaigns and information tables in community settings. Many families have been reached.

As I learned through my research and outreach with nriAHEC and Thundermist, lead poisoning is, sadly, one of many issues currently affecting low-income earners and communities of color. It is very important to get the information out there to everyone, and to ensure access for everyone.

For me, having the experience with nriAHEC has given me access to my options and to resources that allow me to better analyze my future career plans. I am still not sure what I will pursue when I am done with college. However, I do know that I want to do something in Public Health, and I know that I have the experience to support it.

Do you? If not, step right up, take the jump, and join nriAHEC.

For more information about Northern Rhode Island Area Health Center (nriAHEC), visit www.northernriahec.org. To learn more about the network of National Area Health Centers and Programs, visit the National Area Health Center Organization at www.nationalahec.org.

a lesson learned

listen to your body, optimize your health

by Yvonne Heredia

Health care providers educate and give advice to others on how to best manage health conditions as well as staying healthy. However, it is no secret that many of them don't take their own advice about staying healthy and seeking professional health care when it is needed. Many times we find excuses such as being too busy, too tired or just afraid of what will result from following up on subtle symptoms. The caveat is that we need to follow our own advice and take better care of ourselves.

This past year I neglected my health using the excuse of being too busy and found myself with health issues that have long term consequences, even after contributing to the 2009 Minority Health edition of *She Shines*. If only I listened and followed the advice that I give others.

At the time I was working long hours at work. Then when I would go home, I would spend hours every night studying for my doctorate degree in Public Health. There were signs and symptoms that my body was telling me to pay attention to, but I

ignored them all. I now know from personal experience how important it is to listen to our bodies, especially because some conditions can be prevented.

Below are helpful tips for staying healthy that can be utilized by everyone, including health professionals.

1. Make time to see your provider.
2. Listen to your body when it's trying to tell you something or when you notice symptoms.
3. Get adequate rest every night.
4. Take time off when you need it. Use sick time or personal time if you have it and explore medical leave options if you need it.
5. Overall, put yourself first.

Nothing is more important than caring for you because if you don't place you first, you cannot be of assistance to others. Today, I'm back at work after taking medical leave to address my issues.

First stop, me. Second stop, work. Third stop, *She Shines*. Our Stories. Our Bodies. Our Lives. ❖❖❖



Yvonne Heredia, MSN, RN, works at Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island as a team lead for case management. Her expertise is in obstetrics - Maternal and Child Health. She also developed and founded a community program designed to increase the frequency and quality of prenatal care to high risk and minority populations. Heredia is currently in graduate school working towards a Ph.D in Public Health and is the president of The Rhode Island Black Nurses Association. To reach her at Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, visit www.nhpri.org or call 459-6000.

Photo by Agapao Productions.

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Michelle Wilson lives in Providence, where she's raising two sons. Before living in Providence, Wilson lived and worked in Columbia, Maryland, after moving there following college. She is an active member of the Mount Hope/East Side community of Providence, and a volunteer with a number of community organizations and charities.

Photo by Agapao Productions.



communicating with community pushing policies studying social determinants

health equity and the Urban League of Rhode Island

by Michelle Wilson

HIV/AIDS, obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. These are just a few of the many preventable diseases that have historically and disproportionately claimed the lives of African Americans and people of color, and highlighted the existence of health disparities based on race and income.

In recent years, the discussion on ending these disparities and reaching health equity has come to the forefront as state and federal agencies and health advocates tackle the differences highlighted above as well as issues of health reform and how to improve overall health outcomes for the nation's most vulnerable populations. But they are not the first.

As director of community services for the Urban League of Rhode Island (ULRI), I am honored to continue the agency's legacy of advancing health equity for at-risk populations living in the city of Providence and throughout Rhode Island. That is because since our founding in 1939, ULRI has maintained a strong presence in addressing many of the major health concerns found among communities of color and priority populations. Programs have focused on such issues as nutrition, injury and violence prevention, diet and exercise, cancer, stress management and diabetes, to name a few. We've also looked at more recent topics.

Dating as far back as 1997, ULRI joined in the fight against HIV/AIDS when the agency received funding from the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) to provide high-risk women with prevention education workshops. With help from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), ULRI,

since 2000, has been able to expand its program to include access to high-risk individuals involved with the state's judicial and correctional facilities.

Also for almost a decade, the agency's Tobacco Control Program has remained diligent in bringing awareness to African American and low income populations about the harmful effects of tobacco, secondhand smoke and tobacco by-products. Most recently, ULRI was a partner agency in the collection of data for a program that looked at "Geographical Information Systems" (GIS) mapping, which focuses on finding trends by location. Results of the project revealed tremendous disparities in the sale of these deadly products since GIS mapping allowed researchers to see disproportionately higher rates of advertising and promotion of cigarettes in low income, urban neighborhoods as compared to higher income, suburban communities. There was also evidence of strategies and product placement that targeted all youth.

Along with other tobacco coalition partners, ULRI has used these findings to advocate for stronger legislative oversight of tobacco sales, restrictions on predatory advertising, and other important policy-changes. And as the discussion on the elimination of racial and health disparities advances, ULRI will continue to be front and center.

Currently, for example, ULRI is one of several agencies funded by a Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant through HEALTH and the CDC – a special program designed to improve health in communities of color. Joining a number of

community organizations in this campaign, our agency efforts have focused on engaging the community in the federal and state's new, broader focus on reaching health equity and examining social determinants of health. Studying social determinants is based on looking at whether or not groups have access to quality education, safe housing and neighborhoods, and career opportunities, or looking at where individuals live, work and play.

Funding under the Preventive Health grant also led to the founding of ULRI's new blog, UrbanHealthWatch.net, which was created to advance health literacy, promote culturally appropriate health messaging and engage in two-way communication with the community on persistent and emerging health issues and topics. The feedback we receive will allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the community's interests and needs, as well as help key stakeholders develop directly responsive action plans and programs – as defined by diverse populations.

After all, it is predicted that by 2045, more than half of the population in the U.S. will be persons-of-color. My role as director of community services and the mission of ULRI will be to continue to develop effective programs and services to improve health outcomes for these future generations, and all Rhode Islanders in general.

For more information on the Urban League of Rhode Island, visit www.ulri.org or call 351-5000. To follow the agency's new health blog, Urban Health Watch, visit www.UrbanHealthWatch.net.

The 16th Annual Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook Breakfast is on Monday, April 12, 8-10am at Westin Providence.

Photo and image courtesy of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.

more joy for women and children

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT on Early Head Start

by Elizabeth Burke Bryant

Pregnancy and the birth of a child are both joyful and stressful times as parents adjust to new roles and a new way of interacting as a family. In terms of stressors, new responsibilities place increased economic, social and emotional demands on mothers and fathers. All families need a positive and supportive network of relationships around them as they make the transition to parenthood.

Yet for many women, pregnancy and parenthood are challenging times filled with anxiety over health issues or lack of economic resources. Some women do not have a network of friends, neighbors and family members to rely on for guidance, help and advice. It is these families that benefit most from Early Head Start, a “two-generation” program with services provided for parents and children.

Established in 1994, Early Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood program serving low-income families during pregnancy and through the child’s third birthday. Early Head Start promotes healthy births for pregnant women, fosters healthy

family relationships, helps women and their families with education and jobs, and connects families to high-quality early learning programs and other needed services.

Early Head Start is a program that has been proven to make a difference in the lives of families with infants and toddlers. For example, children who participate in Early Head Start have significant gains in cognitive and language development, while parents have been found to have more positive interactions with their babies and toddlers. Early Head Start parents also provide greater opportunities for language and learning to their children – as compared to parents not participating in Early Head Start. Especially important to those working with teen parents is that mothers who participate have fewer subsequent births within two years of enrollment, and they are more likely to participate in education and job-training activities.

There are six Early Head Start programs in Rhode Island serving almost 400 families, but more



will receive help soon. Thanks to investments that were part of the President’s American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Rhode Island will receive federal funds to serve 134 additional families.

More families served, more moments of joy.

Elizabeth Burke Bryant is the executive director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. This statewide children’s policy organization works to improve and ensure the economic well-being, health, safety, education and development of Rhode Island children. Early Head Start is one of over 60 issues covered in the annual Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook available at www.rikidscount.org. Early Head Start Programs in Rhode Island: CHILD, Inc. Children’s Friend; Comprehensive Community Action Program; East Bay Community Action; and Meeting Street TriTown Economic Opportunity Committee.



UrbanHealthWatch.net

Join the Discussions. Create the Solutions.

UrbanHealthWatch.net is a project managed by the Urban League of Rhode Island. It is funded by the RI Prevention Block Grant, a program of the RI Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The purpose of the blog is to advance health equity, and to promote culturally appropriate health messaging and chronic disease prevention.

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Rocio Alvarez, a student at Dorcas Place, practices the 'FUNdamentals of Healthcare' on her classmate's leg. For information about an upcoming class, call Sue Midwood at Quality Partners of Rhode Island, 528-3259.

Photos courtesy of Quality Partners.



employment in healthcare all aboard with Quality Partners

by Marguerite McLaughlin

They beam like kids in a candy store as they survey the array of stethoscopes and medical equipment, which crowd the tabletops in the cluttered classroom. It's clear that they delight in knowing they will learn to use this equipment and that they imagine themselves as nurses and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) – rushing about to help the frail, the sick and the needy. The tools allow them to see themselves in a place where they'll be respected, valued and highly skilled.

They brighten in those transcendent moments, and when they speak of their children; of coming to America; and of learning English. Led by a dream or journey they each hold dear, these are adult students participating in a program designed to improve literacy and occupational skills – in route to a career in healthcare. They represent many countries, a wide range of ages and an even wider range of maturity and experience. Yet, they come together in support of each other and their respective hopes to make a difference in the lives of those in need, their own families and assuredly, themselves.

In Rhode Island, there are many traditional opportunities to catch the speed rail to a healthcare occupation. For the traditional student, the train leaves the station in first grade and travels uninterrupted through the last depot stop – college and/or graduate school. There, the lucky traveler picks up their shiny diploma or license in medicine, dentistry, nursing, radiology, physical therapy, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, etc. He or she then gets a job, picks up an SUV and buys a house in the suburbs. He or she will then pass the tradition on to their 2.3 children.

For these folks there is plenty of support along the way making the journey easy and comfortable. There are

regular meals, steady bedtimes, homework help and rides to school; parents with high paying jobs and the flexibility to leave work, watch soccer games and provide rides to the college interview; access to student loans and time to enjoy campus life; and a network of their family's good contacts and references. But what happens when all of those pillars are not in place?

While this scenario is true for many people, it does not reflect a growing percentage of those who find themselves without a ride to the station or a ticket to hop on-board, or for those who arrive to see that the train has left the depot – without another on the horizon.

The good news? This group of life passengers has not gone unnoticed.

One group responding in Rhode Island is the Governor's Workforce Board, a 17-member group that develops "strategies to improve the existing skill base of the Rhode Island workforce and to anticipate the future needs of growing and emerging businesses." One of the Board's initiatives has been creating "Industry Partnerships" to connect and provide support to nine high-growth industries, including through "non-traditional pathways" and "career ladders." These pathways and ladders identify and open opportunities outside of the traditional type of educational and occupational route highlighted above. They also include supports to help alleviate roadblocks that occur because of childcare, transportation and domestic violence issues.

Emerging among the nine career areas was healthcare and, soon after, the question of how to support individuals who longed to enter the field. After all, from advanced levels of math and science, to long qualifying tests that must be taken in English

and/or performed in view of others, the stringent requirements and academic sophistication needed for a number of positions in medicine are well-known and out of reach for many.

To respond to the Workforce Board's inclusion of the healthcare industry, and in acknowledgment of the diverse backgrounds of those interested in the field, Quality Partners of Rhode Island created the course *FUNdamentals of Healthcare*. The aim was to respond to the need for more "contextualized curriculum" for those at "lower ranges of the educational spectrum," by coupling literacy skill-building with topics required for early entry into healthcare. As is the case for a sizable slice of community, for adults who read at or between the fourth and sixth grade level, finding a job can be difficult.

When asked why she decided to study the "FUNdamentals," Rocio Alvarez, a woman whose homeland is Mexico, softens and says, "I have always dreamed to be a CNA." It's because, she says, "I want to make a difference!" Her eyes then glisten even further as she asks if she can share a story with the class; it's a group assembled for a pre-CNA program through the Career Center at Dorcas Place, an agency focused on adult learning opportunities for low-income Rhode Islanders. Encouraged by her instructor (and my colleague), Sue Midwood, Alvarez begins, negotiating and at times, stumbling through her English: "My brother has cancer and is very sick," she tells them in a teary expression of concern. She goes on to reference a lesson from the day before that dealt with materials and techniques used for tending to a specific medical condition.

"I want you to know that I was able to help my brother," Alvarez goes

on to say, explaining her familiarity with instructions for her brother's care. It was because the doctor prescribed the same tools and applications they had just learned through their curriculum, a comprehensive guide that also includes lessons on English-language development, public speaking and fieldtrips. "I made a difference in another person's life and that is what I have been praying [for] day after day," says Alvarez, "a way to make a difference and now I have found that way! My dream has come true!" Pausing very briefly, she quickly adds, "And so can yours!" The beautiful and expressive middle-aged woman then rejoins the class, which, in unison, appears to sit in astonished silence.

The Rocio Alvarez's of the world are poised and ready to bring their warm loving hearts and their skilled and caring hands to the world of healthcare. Ensuring the availability of non-traditional pathways and alternative career ladders to healthcare jobs for her and her small army – it simply cannot happen quickly enough! ❄️

Marguerite McLaughlin is a senior program administrator at Quality Partners of Rhode Island, an agency that works with healthcare providers, consumers, insurers, policymakers to improve healthcare safety. McLaughlin has extensive experience researching and supporting long-term care providers in Rhode Island and has partnered with Rhode Island Department of Labor, Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, CCRI and YWCA Northern Rhode Island, to study and address labor shortages in the healthcare industry.





just sayin'

by Deborah L. Perry

take an active role in eye health

Retina see's healthy vision in 2010



YWCA Northern Rhode Island received support from the National Eye Institute to create a life sized puppet named Retina. Retina engages the community in conversations about the importance of eye health in a unique and approachable way. Retina, back row center, participated in a community conversation about eye health at YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Pictured with Retina are APPLE Youth Enrichment participants, front row from left, Justin Preble, Evelyn Cesse, Jayden Fernandez, Ryan Andrade, Matthew Eagan, Katie Cabrera, Keyla Lopez, Meerah Ganeshram and Aaliyah Folco; middle row, Tanaysia Sanders, Armani Andrade, Dana Pizzarelli, Latrell Lopez, Julia Tavares, Savannah Andrade and Aleiyla Wilcox. Back row, Dr. Jeffrey S. Kenyon, Cynthia Gagnon as Retina and Dr. Thomas M. Sheehan.
Retina photo by Casandra Lewis. Top photo by Agapao Productions.

Statistics and a predisposition for eye disease are two big reasons minorities must take an active role in their eye health. Latino and African American eye health minority groups have among the highest rates of visual impairment and eye disease such as glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. In fact, glaucoma is 4 to 5 times more prevalent in African Americans than Caucasians and 75 percent of Latinos currently living with glaucoma and ocular hypertension are unaware of their disease.

Blindness affects African Americans

more frequently than Latinos and Caucasians; and Latinos, due to poor eye health education and a genetic predisposition for eye disease, have higher rates of visual impairment than any race or ethnicity.

Many eye diseases are preventable and often times if caught in time vision loss can be reversed or minimized. The later an eye problem is diagnosed, the harder it becomes to treat. This April, in honor of Minority Health Awareness Month, we urge everyone and in particular minorities to evaluate their eye health.

See page 19, for a calendar of events during April's Minority Health Awareness Month.

sights and sounds for the she spirit

rise up

for music, health and Haiti

by Shevon Young



I normally do not watch television, but I happened to catch the news one day – a devastating earthquake had just struck Haiti. Immediately heartbroken when I saw all the damage and destruction it caused, an overwhelming sensation of needing to act came over me.

The question, what could I do? I'm no CEO or state department head. My name is Shevon Young, I am twenty-nine years old, and the mother of four children. Born and raised in Providence, my feet had never touched down in the island nation. But I am a member of a local music group that calls itself SlyShuga, and I had a sense that the answer was there.

SlyShuga mixes Spoken Word Poetry, Hip Hop, R&B and Jazz. We began working with other artists through a concept we called "G.E.T. In Here Thursdays." G.E.T., which stands for Great Eclectic Talent, allowed us to build relationships with other area businesses and organizations. It was from this network of artists and community members that the answer to my Haiti question would emerge, Rise as One: A Benefit Concert for Haiti.

The network continued expanding. With the response to initial requests for artists and volunteers being immediate and undeniable, we decided to seek fiscal sponsors and solidified partnerships with two locally-run charities to ensure our efforts would directly reach the citizens of Haiti: La Providence a local Haitian organization and His Home for Children orphanage in Haiti.

On February 20, at Rosinhas Restaurant and Bar in Pawtucket, the R.A.1 concert took place, and it was a success. Dozens of vocalists, bands and other performers donated their time, joining the cash and in-kind donations given by the roomful of attendees. Immediately afterward we purchased formula, peanut butter, tuna fish and waterproof tents – items that will help to keep children a little more healthy. On March 3, these items were all shipped.

As I reflect, it's hard not to think of the whole group. I think because all of the women on the R.A.1. team were mothers, it was important to us to reach out to the children of Haiti. I encourage other mothers and women to also get involved. ✪✪✪

Photo courtesy of Dipupo Creations.

encouraging healthy choices

shining

with Dee Dee Williams

Williams is developing a book on breast health, “It has been a journey . . . My hope was that a mother would sit down with her young daughter and show her this book and talk to her about breasts. Talk to her about self examination and breast cancer. Talk to her about her body. That was my hope and my intention, but what I am finding is the younger women are teaching older women how to let go.”



I hear you are working on a book. “One time I was doing a training with some young folks on self esteem . . . I put up some posters around the room with different body parts and [asked them] to list the names that they have heard those parts called. When they got to breasts, we needed another piece of paper . . . Then a friend of mine found out that her sister had breast cancer. Her sister was diagnosed and passed away within a year. It hit me . . . create this book [entitled ‘The Girls’] . . . every woman has a breast story. Take some pictures and put this compilation together . . . Help women feel empowered

not only about their bodies, but also about choices. When you feel good about yourself, you make healthier and better choices.”

You are a minister? “A licensed minister is really someone who just ministers to people freely . . . I do women’s healing services in the community.” “Reaching out to the homeless and those underserved. I like to look at my life as this. I’ve been a minister all my life, I just got my license in the last seven years . . . I have always worked with women in some way shape or form to educate . . . So formally my jobs have been in domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, homeless, teen run-aways . . . but informally in my community and in my ministry I have done that . . . I can ride the city bus and end up ministering to someone who is homeless and end up finding them a shelter to stay that night. So it’s always been my life . . . what I feel I’ve been called to do.”

Currently you are working at Housing Action Coalition? “I think it was my turn to learn about how to get people in safe, affordable housing.” *Williams is director of outreach and engagement.*

What is behind the drive in these community efforts? “I would like every woman to feel the way I feel about life . . . You know they [her grandma and mother] spent quality time nurturing and loving me and so I’ve always felt powerful and loved and capable of doing anything. Then as I grew up, friends and neighbors I’ve been around didn’t always feel that way. It saddens me. I want to give women that gift . . . of loving herself or changing her mind about an unhealthy thing that she was thinking about. Making sure she’s safe. Getting her some food. Putting her on the right track to get a job. If I can give anything that changes a woman’s life for the better, that’s what makes it worthwhile . . . I want to give back, cause I think we’re wonderful and I don’t think we know it.”

You gave the keynote address for the Parenting in Progress Graduation and Awards Ceremony. What is your connection with YWCA? “They [teen mothers] gave me such joy . . . I just love the YWCA. I believe in its mission. I believe that it is a wonderful empowering place for women and young girls, especially because they provide things that break down barriers . . . It’s a place that women can go and get what they need and feel safe . . . They grow there.”

What factors influence health outcomes? “There are a lot of health disparities and barriers to accessing care, especially for women and especially for minority women. So when you think about breaking down those barriers, I think education is most important . . . you want to make sure you are educating folks about different cultures, about different needs and values . . . We need to educate not just the people who are accessing these services, but we need to educate the providers of these services and those who are funding those providers . . . The benefits are great when we do that . . . The impact is on a community.”

Will you share a personal health story? “I work so much with clients in helping them to access services and advocating for them, that I was not advocating for myself . . . its a lesson learned.” “I got diagnosed with fibromyalgia over seven years ago. Before then, I was having so many problems and didn’t understand why . . . Not until two years ago did I find a doctor . . . I feel like finally I am in good hands and on my way to better health.”

Tell me about your youth? “I’m from Baltimore, Maryland. It is where my roots are.” “I had wonderful strong women who poured into me, so I was always able to feel beautiful, always feel strong and knew that I could conquer this world.” “Rhode Island is my home . . . when we moved [at age nine], my mother made sure that her [two] daughters were safe and that we got a good education . . . I always knew the expectation in my family was education and what was most important to me was to please my family.”

What have you discovered in your life experience? “Follow your heart . . . I went to school for teaching. Although I feel like teaching is a part of ministry, I like what I’ve learned in the world more than what I’ve learned in school. I think nothing prepares you for the stories that you hear from folks and for what women will trust you with.”

Do you have a message for young women? “I know it is hard, but find someone, another woman who you can trust and learn from. Hold onto her and value her and let her hold onto you and value you. I think that’s what we need to do for each other . . . and if you can’t find anybody, then find me.”

Interview by Lisa Piscatelli. Photo by Agapao Productions.

“I believe that all the women that have helped me in my life, I wear around my neck as beautiful gems.” - Dee Dee Williams

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE
1923-2010

spring III session 2010 northern rhode island



REGISTRATION BEGINS APRIL 26

SIX WEEK SESSION
5/9 - 6/19 (no class Monday, 5/31)

SUMMER CAMPS

Registration and deposit required. \$5/wk members. \$10/wk nonmembers.

DOODLE BUGS begins 6/14

Mon.-Fri., 9am-1pm, \$100/wk, \$20/day
Early Birds and/or after camp options for an additional \$6/day (each program). Families needing full time care, speak with receptionist regarding childcare options. For children age 2 1/2 to 3 1/2.

BUSY BEE begins 6/14

Mon.-Fri., 9am-1pm, \$75/wk, \$15/day
Mon.-Fri., 1-5pm, \$75/wk, \$15/day
Early Birds and/or after camp options for an additional \$6/day (each program). Families needing full time care, speak with receptionist regarding childcare options. Children must be ages 3 to 5 and fully toilet trained to participate.

KIDS SPORTS CLUB and TWO-RIFFIC DAYS begins 6/21

Mon., Tues., Wed., 9am-1pm, \$60/wk
Thurs. and Fri., 9am-1pm, \$40/wk
Early Birds option from 8-9am for an additional \$6/day. For ages 4 to 6.

ADVENTURE begins 6/23

Mon.-Fri., 7:45am-5:45pm, \$142/wk, \$29/day. For ages 6 to 12. Half days available, \$15 for a 4 hour day. Groups divided by age. Field trips, guest speakers, cooking, outdoor recreation, sports, and arts/crafts. Other activities: movie making, plays, face painting, scary stories, time in new YWCA computer lab.

JUNIOR LEADERSHIP begins 6/23

Wed. - Fri., 7:45am-5:45pm, \$60/wk
For students entering grades 7, 8 and 9. Additional days at \$20/day. Half days also available, \$10 for a 4 hour day. As Junior Leaders, in conjunction with staff, campers will monitor children's safety and coordinate activities. Students learn personal responsibility in an intellectually and physically stimulating environment.

YOUTH ENRICHMENT

SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

We are there for you when school is closed. YWCA provides an all day youth enrichment program for children age 6-15 when school is cancelled due to inclement weather and during school vacation. In order to participate, you must register your child in advance, 769-7450.

AFTER SCHOOL

For program details call Nathan Smith, Youth Enrichment Program Coordinator, 769-7450.

For students attending any Woonsocket elementary school (public or Catholic) and the Woonsocket Middle School. Mon.-Fri., 2-6:30pm (3 day minimum), \$17/day. Children are bussed to YWCA from their schools, enjoy a free snack, participate in fun activities, offered homework help and special events. Builds on the strengths and values of youth by providing them with a supportive, safe and culturally diverse environment in which they can develop positive qualities for school success and a productive future. Activities geared towards fostering individual creativity and imagination and the ability to implement the child's own original ideas. New computer lab and library.

APPLE YOUTH ENRICHMENT

The APPLE curriculum includes Academics, Physical education/recreation, Prevention, Leadership and Empowerment. Our philosophy is to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children in Kindergarten to age 15. Program focuses on a youth's individual needs. We provide a safe, nurturing and enriching program, which parents can rely upon throughout the year, especially after school, school vacations and during the summer. Program encourages healthy social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Licensed by Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.

VACATION CAMPS

DOODLE BUGS

For children 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years of age. Enjoy books, games and activities.

April 19-23. 9am-1pm, \$20/day. Early Birds and/or after camp options for an additional \$6/hour/day (each program). Families needing full time care, speak with receptionist regarding childcare options.

BUSY BEE

For children 3 to 5 years of age. Enjoy books, games and activities.

April 19-23. 9am -1pm, \$15/day. 1-5pm, \$15/day. Early Birds and/or after camp options for an additional \$6/hour/day (each program). Families needing full time care, speak with receptionist regarding childcare options.

ADVENTURE

For children 6 to 12 years of age. Junior Leadership option available for children 13 and over. Free snack, games, contests, prizes, movie making, cooking, sports, arts/crafts, face painting, and more.

April 19-23. 6:30am-6pm, \$29/day. Half days available, \$15 for a 4 hour day.

GYMNASTICS ACADEMY

GYMNASTICS - BASIC

3 1/2 to 5 years old

BEGINNER GYMNASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Preschoolers have the opportunity to advance to higher levels.

Fri. 3:30-4:30pm \$36/6wks

4 to 7 years old

BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE GYM- NASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Students have the opportunity to advance to higher levels.

Thurs. 4:30-5:30pm \$36/6wks

Sat. 10:15-11:30am \$45/6wks

5 to 12 years old

BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE GYM- NASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Students have the opportunity to

advance to higher levels.
Fri. 4:30-5:30pm \$36/6wks
Sat. 9-10:15am \$45/6wks

GYMNASTICS - CONTINUING

All classes listed below require permission from instructor for participation. Call Jennie Graham or Debbie Fay at 769-7450.

4 to 7 years old

ADVANCED PEE WEE GYMNASTICS-LEVEL I & II

Thurs. 3:30-4:30pm \$36/6wks

5 to 9 years old

ADVANCED GYMNASTICS

Mon. 5-6pm \$30/5wks

5 to 12 years old

ADVANCED GYMNASTICS

Tues. 3:45-5pm \$45/6wks

PRE TEAM

Sat. 11:30am-1pm \$54/6wks

COMPETITIVE TEAM

Monthly fee for all competitive teams:

One day a week \$44/month

Two days a week \$86/month

Three days a week \$100/month

Jennie Graham, Head Coach

Breonna Gentes, Assistant Coach

HOT SHOTS 4 to 9 years old

Sat. 9-11am

TEAM A 8 to 16 years old

Sat. 11am-1pm

TEAM B 8 to 16 years old

Sat. 11am-1pm

TEAM C 8 to 16 years old

Thurs. 4:15-6:30pm

Sat. 1:30-4pm

TEAM D 9 to 18 years old

Tues. 3:45-6:30pm

Fri. 4:15-6:30pm

Sat. 1:30-4pm

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER



Now open for child care at 6:30am for ages 5 and under. For details on child care, pre-pre-school or preschool call Mary Anne Deslauriers, Director of Early Childhood Education, at 769-7450.

CHILD CARE

INFANT/TODDLER

Our philosophy is to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children 8 weeks (6 weeks with pediatrician consent) to 3 years that focuses on a child's individual needs. We provide a safe and nurturing program, parents can rely upon throughout the year. The Early Childhood Learning Center encourages healthy social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.

PRE-PRESCHOOL

LITTLE LEARNERS

Pre-preschool for children 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years of age. With a consistent daily schedule modeled after our existing preschool program, children will be offered opportunities for socialization, creativity and toilet training. Daily schedule includes circle time, songs, storytime, snack, play and creative projects. 9am-noon. Two, three or five day options available. Early Birds and Lunch Bunch available. Child care option also available for the afternoon.

PRESCHOOL

PRESCHOOL

The YWCA preschool is a developmental program for children age 3 to 5. Our philosophy is reflected in a "hands on" approach to learning through interactive experiences with peers, the environment and adults. Our most important function at the YWCA preschool is to ensure that each child's first school experience is safe, joyful and enriching. Two, three and five-day programs with morning, afternoon or full day options available. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

STEPPING STONES

Unique transitional program for children whose parents are postponing Kindergarten entrance. YWCA Stepping Stones is a developmentally appropriate setting where children participate in a program designed to enhance

growth and development socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically. Small class size (maximum 15) allows for much individual attention and teacher/peer involvement. Program meets Mon.-Fri., 1-4pm. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

The YWCA offers extended day programs to help accommodate a parent or guardians' schedule.

EARLY BIRDS

Children enjoy morning activities in a classroom environment from 6:30-9am, then are escorted to respective classrooms. \$6/hour/day

LUNCH BUNCH

Children eat lunch in a social environment then are offered center activities from noon-1pm. Lunches are brought from home. \$6/day

AFTER PRESCHOOL CARE

Children are engaged in age-appropriate activities including gross motor play in playground from 4-6pm. \$6/hour/day.

PARENTING PROGRAM

PARENTING

16 to 21 years old

PARENTING IN PROGRESS (PIP)

An alternative education, life skills and job training program housed at YWCA in collaboration with Woonsocket Education Department, Project RIRAL, BVCAP, Connecting for Children and Families, Young Voices and area businesses. Eligible applicants must live in Woonsocket and be pregnant or parenting young women under 21 years old. Mon.-Fri., 9am-1pm.

For details, call Deb Smith, RN and Parenting in Progress Site Coordinator, at 769-7450.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

GYM PROGRAMS

All physical education classes are under the direction of Debbie Fay.

DESIGN YOUR OWN CLASS!

Any age group. Learn t-ball, floor hockey, golf, tennis, etc. Call Debbie Fay, Physical Education Director, 769-7450. Subject to time and space availability. Prices set by usage.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES DURING THE WEEK

Let Debbie Fay set up and run a party for your child. Themes: gymnastics, soccer, golf, etc. Call 769-7450 to schedule. Subject to time and space availability. Price set by usage.

Walking to 3 years old

JUMPING BEANS

Gymnastics play with parent.

Tues. 9-10am \$36/6wks
Thurs. 10-11am \$36/6wks

JUMPING BEANS GETS MESSY

One hour of gymnastics play with parent then 1/2 hour of messy activity - crafts or cooking. Fri. 9-10:30am \$54/6wks

2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years old

Independent classes for your child (do not have to be toilet trained).

IDDY BIDDY SNACK ATTACKERS

Come run, have a snack, make a craft and run some more. Mon. 9-noon \$68/5wks

IDDY BIDDY SPORTY CRAFTY CHEFS

Combination of Small World, crafts, games and cooking your own lunch. Come jump and crack some eggs. Non stop action. Wed. 9-noon \$81/6wks

SMALL WORLD I, II, III

Children offered opportunities for socialization, creativity and toilet training. Includes storytime, songs, crafts, playtime, and snack.

SMALL WORLD I

Deb Nault
Thurs. 9-10am \$18/6wks

SMALL WORLD II

Deb Nault
Thurs. 10am-noon \$36/6wks

SMALL WORLD III

Deb Nault
Fri. 9am-noon \$54/6wks

3 to 5 years old

LUNCH WITH THE STARS

Come play a game of Alligator Pit or Polar Bear. One hour of active gym time followed by making your own lunch and eating with the "Stars". Enjoy some playtime. Stuffed animal characters: Dora, Clifford, Cookie Monster, Blues Clues, etc. Mon. noon-2pm \$50/5wks

PRIMO

CHEERLEADING WITH POM POMS

Learn some cheers and pom pom skills used in cheerleading with an introduction to tumbling. Give me a Y, give me a W, give me a C and give me an A. Mon. 3:30-4:30pm \$30/5wks

FUN 'N FRUITY ON THE FLY

Action packed fun on the trampoline, rope or obstacle course. Play a game of alligator pit, t-rex or maybe even polar bear. Each child goes home with a piece of fruit for a snack after supper. Mon. 4-5pm \$30/5wks

SPORTSTASTIC

A new sport every week, socialization and lunch making for your child. Wed. noon-2pm \$60/6wks

TUMBLING CRAFTY COOKS

Beginner gymnastics skills training combined with cooking and eating. Tues. noon-2pm \$60/6wks

INSIDE/OUTSIDE ADVENTURES

Nice weather we will spend time outside on playground collecting bugs, bird watching and more. Bad weather we will play games in the gym. All activities followed by lunch the children prepare. Thurs. noon-2pm \$60/6wks

GYMNASTIC FANTASTIC

Fantastic activity packed class. An hour of gymnastics followed by lunch, craft and playtime. Fri. noon-2:30pm \$75/6wks

6 to 12 years old

CHEERLEADING AND TUMBLING

Learn some cheers and tumbling skills used in cheerleading. Give me a Y, give me a W, give me a C and give me an A. Mon. 4:30-5:30pm \$30/5wks

12 to 18 years old

YOGA AND CONDITIONING

Yoga and stretching combined with an overall workout. Sat. 11:30am-12:45pm \$45/6wks

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

EXERCISE FACILITY

17+ years old

WOMEN'S WORKOUT ROOM

Enjoy the privacy of a women's only facility with: a four stack universal machine, bikes, free weights, treadmills and showers. You must pay a \$20 instruction/processing fee and attend an introductory session in order to be eligible to use room. YWCA adult female membership required. For appointment, call Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450.

GOLF

WOMEN'S GOLF LEAGUE

Monday Tee-times starting at 4:30pm. May 3 to August 30 at Melody Hill Country Club. Call Debbie Fay for details, 769-7450. YWCA membership plus \$50 league fee. All golfers must also pay weekly green fees at Melody Hill Country Club.

SHE SHINES™

2009 Metcalf Award for Diversity in the Media

upcoming edition:
Raising Sexually Healthy Children

content due: May 7
distributed: Summer

Published by YWCA Northern Rhode Island, *She Shines* is a magazine celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women. To receive a free subscription, submit content or reserve advertising space, contact Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450. www.sheshines.org

WELLNESS PROGRAMS continued



HEALTH

MINORITY HEALTH PROMOTION CENTER

YWCA Northern Rhode Island has been designated as a Minority Health Promotion Center by the Rhode Island Department of Health. It is the only organization in northern Rhode Island to receive such a designation. Our Association develops and implements health information, health education and risk reduction activities that improve the quality of life and eliminate health disparities for Woonsocket's racial and ethnic populations. Call the YWCA Health Office for more information, 769-7450.

CHRONIC DISEASE

SELF MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

If you have asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis or another chronic disease, this FREE workshop is for you. You will learn: how to manage your symptoms, how to communicate effectively with your doctor; how to lessen your frustration, how to fight fatigue, how to make daily tasks easier and how to get more out of life. The workshop is for anyone who has one or more chronic conditions. A friend, caregiver or relative is welcome to attend with you. They too will benefit from the problem-solving skills related to managing a chronic condition. Call for information on Living Well Rhode Island, Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450.

BREAST CANCER INFORMATION

The Love/Avon Army of Women provides women the life-changing opportunity to partner with the scientists who are conducting the research that will move us beyond a cure and teach us how to end breast cancer once and for all. Sign up at www.armyofwomen.org.

SMOKING CESSATION

Supportive/educational one hour meeting weekly for 8 weeks held in northern Rhode Island area. Call the YWCA Health Office to register, 769-7450.

ENCOREplus®

ENCOREplus® is a systematic approach to women's health promotion, in particular, breast and cervical cancer education. The YWCA offers community outreach, breast and cervical health education, linkage to clinical screening services and assistance in accessing and navigating diagnostic treatment services when necessary. The YWCA also offers support during diagnosis and treatment. If you are over age 40 and have no health insurance or your insurance does not cover breast and

cervical screenings every year, you may qualify for FREE services. The Rhode Island Department of Health Women's Cancer Screening Program provides a women's health exam including clinical breast and pelvic exams, pap smear, mammogram and follow-up services (a repeat mammogram, pap smear, breast ultrasound, colposcopy and biopsy).

For more details call Joyce Dolbec, YWCA Health Consultant, at 769-7450. If hearing/speech impaired call 1-800-745-5555.

EXERCISE

16+ years old

AEROBIC DANCE

Improve your aerobic fitness. Benefits include increase in heart health, muscular endurance, mood, energy level and a decrease in shortness of breath. Fees reflect member rates, nonmembers pay an additional \$20. Colette Doura (new session begins 5/10) Mon./Wed., 7:15-8:15pm \$53/8wks

BELLY DANCING I

Learn exciting moves of ancient Middle Eastern art form: snake arms, figure eights, hip circles, traveling steps and shimmies. Class is for first time students or those wanting to continue with basics before moving on to more advanced skills. No previous dance experience required. Fun, supportive environment. Donia, Tues., 6:30-7:30pm \$36/6wks

BELLY DANCING II

Continue to learn and evolve in the timeless beauty of the belly dance. We will perfect the basics, along with learning new steps, undulations, turns and choreographies. Class is for returning students who are ready for some more advanced moves. Introduction to veil and music theory will be covered as the session progresses. Stay fit while feeling like a goddess! Donia, Tues., 7:30-8:30pm \$36/6wks

HATHA YOGA

Art of movement. Yoga achieves balance between body and mind. It promotes wellness through physical poses, breathing techniques and meditation. Come improve strength and flexibility while reducing stress. Kathy Hopkins Thurs., 7:30-8:45pm \$45/6wks

VINYASA YOGA

All levels class will focus on flowing yoga postures linked with the breath. Get a great workout and reduce stress: finishing restorative poses, breathwork and seated meditation. Samantha Sipura Sat., 9:00-10:15am \$45/6wks

INTRO TO BALLROOM

A beginning dance class for singles or couples who want to learn some basic social ballroom dance steps. A variety of dances will be introduced. The recommended footwear for this class is smooth bottom, soft sole shoes. Come prepared to have fun! Mary DiGiovanni Sat., 11am-noon \$36/6wks

ZUMBA FITNESS

Zumba is a high-energy class. It incorporates several dance styles and motivating music.

With fast and slow rhythms, the class offers cardio intervals and resistance training. It is both fun and easy to learn. Zumba is the latest rage in fitness classes. Maureen Canesi Thurs., 6:30-7:30pm \$36/6wks

WALKING CLUB

The Walking Club begins at John Dionne Track on Cumberland Hill Road, Woonsocket. Look for Jeanne and Bev. Tues., Wed, and Fri. at 10am. Mon. and Thurs. at 6pm. Call YWCA Health Office for details, 769-7450.

VOLLEYBALL LEAGUES

All volleyball leagues are under the direction of Debbie Fay, Physical Education Director. Come prepared to play on organizational nights. Dates subject to change due to weather or other uncontrollable circumstances. To verify times/dates, call Debbie Fay at 769-7450.

Volleyball pick-up games for YWCA members. Front desk will collect names and phone numbers or players interested. Night and time will be decided by players availability. \$5 each week you play.



INTERMEDIATE MIXED CO-ED

Sundays: Organizational night will be held November 7, from 6-8pm. League play begins November 14. Bring in your own teams. If you don't have a team, we will help you get on one. \$112/20 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee May pay in two installments.

POWER CO-ED JOHN PIETROPAOLI LEAGUE

Tuesdays: Advanced players. Organizational night will be held September 7, from 6:45-8:30pm. League play begins September 14. Teams formed by draft. \$56/10 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee

INTERMEDIATE CO-ED

Wednesdays: Intermediate or above players. Organizational night will be held September 8, from 6:45-8:30pm. League play begins September 15. Bring in your own teams. If you don't have a team, we will help you get on one. \$56/10 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee

PICNIC VOLLEYBALL

Inside volleyball games for adults who want to play for fun, friendship and fitness. No refs. No rules (well maybe a couple for safety). Lots of laughs! After the games, come share some free appetizers at Box Seats. Thurs., 7-8pm \$36/6wks

WOMEN'S CLUBS

Y WIVES & GIRLS

The purpose of this club is to build a fellowship of women devoted to the task of enriching each member's life by building a program around education, services for others and recreation. Activities include outings, special events and service projects. Membership is open to women 30 years of age and over. Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays at 1:30pm from September through June. Call YWCA for details, 769-7450.

APRES-MIDI

Club provides opportunities for women to share activities, information and gain new friendships. Activities include guest speakers, outings, restaurant tours, luncheons and demonstrations. Membership is open to women 30 years of age and over. Meetings held on alternate Thursdays at 1:30pm from September through June. Call YWCA for details, 769-7450.

ART STUDIO

ART CLASSES

New and returning students welcome. Every session, new artists and projects are covered.

5 to 10 years old

ART FOR CHILDREN

Introduces young students to basic color theory via fun, hands on, interactive lessons and creativity games. We'll explore a variety of materials and learn about a famous artist or two. Art material fee included in session fee. Missie St. Sauveur Fri. 5-6:30pm \$54/6wks

11 and 12 years old

ART FOR TWEENS

Call for appropriate art class placement, 769-7450. We will gladly try to accommodate.

13+ years old

ART FOR TEENS

Appropriate for a range of experience levels. Combines theory and hand-on projects with a relaxed and social atmosphere. Each class is divided into two sections. In the first, a lesson plan that incorporates art theory, history, new materials and/or technique. Second half, student work on guided projects of their own choice. Art material fee included in session fee. Missie St. Sauveur Mon. 5:15-6:45pm \$45/5wks

Adults and Teens*

FEARLESS ART FOR ADULT BEGINNERS

Have you always itched to try painting, sketching or sculpting? In this class, you get an introduction to art-making, and a little art history, in a relaxed, non-judgmental atmosphere. Come have fun. You may be surprised by what you create. Art material fee included in session fee. * Teens welcome if attending with adult. Missie St. Sauveur Mon. 7-8:30pm \$45/5wks

CONTACT US

514 Blackstone Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
T: 401-769-7450
F: 401-769-7454
www.ywcanri.org

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

6 to 16 years \$12.00
17 to 64 years \$22.00
65 and over \$17.00

Children under 6 must be covered by a parent or guardian membership. Membership fees are not refundable or deductible as a charitable contribution. Reduced rates are available in some classes for members 65 and over. All classes and activities are open to both sexes unless otherwise indicated in the class description. A member may use the membership card at all other YWCAs in the USA.

YWCA membership, paid yearly, is required for participation in all programming except as otherwise indicated. Special non-member fees are available for some adult programs. Men and boys are welcome as associates. As a YWCA member, you have access to:

- low cost, innovative programs
- special membership events
- volunteer opportunities
- use of YWCA facilities nationwide
- membership in the oldest, largest women's movement in the nation

HOURS

Monday to Thursday, 9am-9pm
Friday 9am-6:30pm, Saturday 9am-4:30pm
Monday to Friday, open for child care at 6:30am for ages 5 and under.

TOURS

Are you new to YWCA? Call for more information or to schedule a tour, 769-7450.

SCHEDULE

Classes run in consecutive sessions during the school year with a new schedule for summer.

ROOM RENTALS

Room rentals are available for events. Contact YWCA for details, 769-7450.

STORM POLICY

For YWCA cancellations and closing announcements, listen to radio stations WOON 1240AM & WNRI 1380AM or watch Channel 10 & 12. School system delays, early dismissals, and professional days do not apply to YWCA schedule.

EVENTS

To register for health events, call Joyce Dolbec at YWCA Health Office, 769-7450.

- **April 1, Family Health Insurance Luncheon:** Referrals and resources. Presented by Neighborhood Health Plan of RI. Begins at 11:30am at YWCA.
- **April 6, Hospice vs Palliative Care:** YWCA and Woonsocket Cancer Control Task

Force present workshop for patients, families and healthcare professional. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society will provide free CEU's. Referrals and resources from 5-7pm at Landmark Medical Center, Woonsocket.

- **April 14, Family Fun Night:** Social family activities plus health and wellness information and resources available from 6-8pm at YWCA.
- **April 16, Women & Infants Family Van:** In Woonsocket from 10am-2pm.
- **April 17, 10th Annual Family Hearing and Health Screening Fair:** Free. Wellness sessions, blood drive, nutrition and CPR demonstrations, walking club, referrals, resources and door prizes from 10am-2pm at Elk's Hall, 280 Social Street, Woonsocket.
- **April 19 - 23, School Vacation Camps:** Doodle Bugs, Busy Bee and Adventure Camp options for children age 2 1/2 to teens. Call the YWCA Front Desk for details, 769-7450.
- **April 27, Everything You Wanted to Know About Lobbying:** YWCA in collaboration with the American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network, curriculum on lobbying regarding legislation in Rhode Island that pertains to health. From 6-7:30pm at American Cancer Society, Jefferson Blvd, Warwick.
- **April 28, CPR 101 Class:** Discussion, referrals and resources. Presented by Lifespan and hosted at YWCA beginning at 7pm. For adults and youth 16 year old or older.
- **May 4, Women's Health Event:** 10am at Women and Infants, Woonsocket. Bagels and coffee. Co-sponsored by YWCA.

- **May 5, Elder Breakfast:** At Landmark Medical Center beginning at 9am. Sponsored by YWCA and Woonsocket Prevention Coalition.
- **May 7, Mother's Day Breakfast:** For students in the Parenting in Progress program.
- **May 8, Spa Day for Breast Cancer Survivors:** Presented and held at YWCA with Gloria Gemma Foundation from 12:30-4:30pm.
- **July 18, Golf Tournament.** Support YWCA as a player, hole sponsor, or raffle prize donor. Call Debbie Fay for details, 769-7450.

NOTABLE

- CPR re-certification completed for nine staff.
- YWCA History to Hallmark seminar completed for five staff and a board members.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kim Garneau, President
Cathy Brien, Vice President
Susan Gershkoff, Esq., Treasurer
Marissa Trinke, Secretary
Rosemary Brite
Alessandra Borges
Lisa Carcifero
Gail Davis
Susan Donahue, DC
Vivian Godin
Lisa Harnois
Jeanne Lynch
Yvette Mendez
Stella Nared
Deborah L. Perry, Executive Director



YWCA MISSION

YWCA Northern Rhode Island is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

SPRING III SESSION 2010



**Stand
Against
Racism**

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

Racism Hurts Everyone

Join us on
Friday, April 30, 2010
**and Take a Stand for Peace, Justice,
Freedom, and Dignity for All**

For more information go to:
www.StandAgainstRacism.org

Stand Against Racism.

Call YWCA Northern Rhode Island
for participation details, 769-7450.

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

ywca northern rhode island



we're making a difference

Established 1923

president's report



The year 2009 proved to be a successful one for YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Our early childhood development and after school programs grew by leaps and bounds; adult programming was expanded; and we obtained substantial grant funding to provide health outreach services to underinsured and uninsured members of our community. We also took on a leadership role in a statewide initiative to prevent teen pregnancy and support young families through our involvement with the Rhode Island Teen Pregnancy Coalition.

Our efforts to offer programs and services to eliminate racism and empower women did not go unnoticed. YWCA Northern Rhode Island's *She Shines* Magazine was awarded the prestigious Metcalf Award for diversity in media. Our youth enrichment summer camp program is now among a select group of camps in Rhode Island accredited by the American Camp Association. And we received recognition for our community health outreach efforts from Quality Health Partners of Rhode Island, a nationally recognized leader in health-care quality improvement.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the YWCA board of directors, team members and general membership, our reputation as **The Association** which works to eliminate racism and empower women, continues to grow.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim Garneau".

Kim Garneau, President
YWCA Northern Rhode Island

statement of financial position for year ending December 31, 2008

ASSETS

Cash	\$518,610
Investments	989,890
Accounts Receivable	22,445
Other Current Assets	67,327
Fixed Assets (net)	<u>808,293</u>
Total Assets	\$2,406,565

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$7,056
Accrued Liabilities	<u>28,584</u>
Total Liabilities	\$35,640

FUND BALANCE

Unrestricted	\$2,291,425
Temporarily Restricted	79,500
Permanently Restricted	0
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$2,370,925</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$2,406,565

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Kim Garneau

Vice President
Cathy Brien

Treasurer
Susan Gershkoff, Esq.

Secretary
Marissa Trinqué

Rosemary Brite
Alessandra Borges
Lisa Carcifero
Gail Davis
Susan Donahue, DC
Vivian Godin
Lisa Harnois
Jeanne Lynch
Yvette M. Mendez
Stella Nared

Executive Director
Deborah L. Perry

CORE STAFF

Director of Finance / Human Resources
Holly Courtemanche

Director of Early Childhood Education
Mary Anne Deslauriers

Director of Physical Education
Debbie Fay

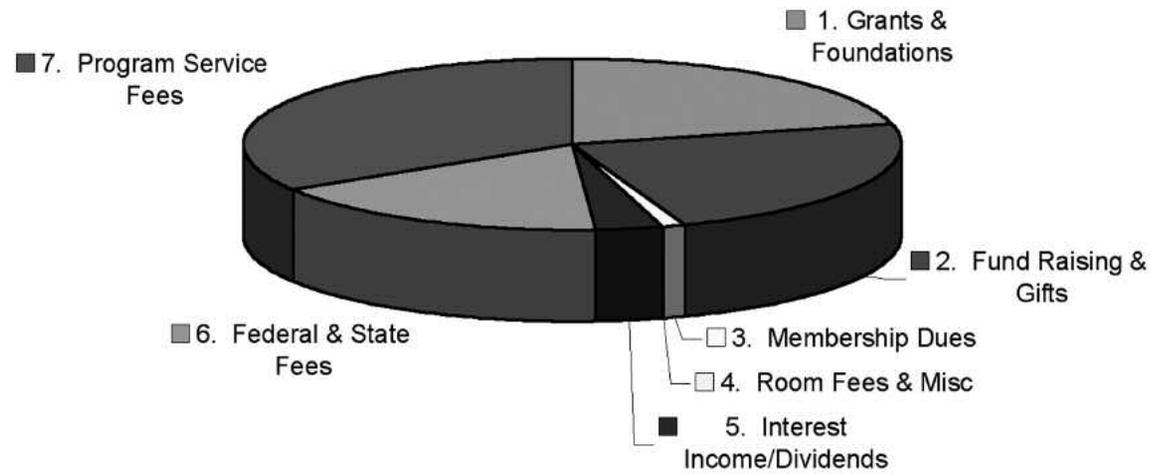
Director of Communications
Lisa Piscatelli

Youth Enrichment Program Coordinator
Nathan Smith

PIP Coordinator / Registered Nurse
Deborah Smith

budget for fiscal year 2009 1/1/09 - 12/31/09

INCOME	2009 BUDGET	PERCENT OF BUDGET
1. Grants & Foundations	247,148.00	20.99%
2. Fund Raising & Gifts	274,630.00	23.33%
3. Membership Dues	13,000.00	1.10%
4. Room Fees & Misc	1,060.00	0.09%
5. Interest Income/Dividends	39,700.00	3.37%
6. Federal & State Fees	203,944.00	17.32%
7. Program Service Fees	397,817.00	33.79%
TOTAL INCOME	1,177,299.00	



compelling future



Board members Yvette Mendez, Gail Davis and Kim Garneau at the YWCA Women Holding Office Reception at Kirkbrae Country Club on March 19, 2009.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island, a nonprofit organization, was established in 1923 and has been providing programs and services to the northern Rhode Island and surrounding Massachusetts communities for over 86 years.

Strengthened by diversity, the Association draws together members who strive to create opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power in order to attain a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Our goal is to eliminate racism and to empower women. We serve 20,000 people annually and are housed in an 18,000 square foot building located on 4.2 acres of land in the north end of the City of Woonsocket.

Our annual operating budget is 1.2 million.

Fiscal year 2009 income was generated from program fees, state reimbursements for child-care, grants, corporate sponsorship and membership generosity.

An executive director, finance director, communications director, physical education director, early childhood development director, youth enrichment coordinator and a parenting coordinator provide administrative support to our organization. In addition to our core staff, there are over 40 part-time employees who work at our facility during the course of the year. Fourteen women currently serve on our board of directors. Over 75 individuals volunteer during the course of the year. Our staff and board members are culturally and linguistically diverse and reflect the makeup of the community we serve.

proud history



YWCA Northern Rhode Island at 514 Blackstone Street in Woonsocket, circa 1970's.
Photo reprinted with permission by The Woonsocket Call.

In 1923, Woonsocket caused a national uproar. That year, YWCA Northern Rhode Island defied tradition and voted to open its doors to women of all religious denominations.

The action was stunning - appalling to some - because since the organization's founding in England in 1855, YWCA membership had been restricted solely to women of Evangelical Protestant faith.

Although the open policy generated controversy for some time, three years later the national YWCA followed suit and admitted the Woonsocket YWCA to membership.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island was founded in 1923 under a \$60,000 grant willed by

Dency Wilbur (1840-1919), a physician of the Quaker faith, who recognized the needs of young women. It's first president was Mrs. Samuel E. Hudson, whose husband was publisher of *The Woonsocket Call*.

The YWCA has always been located in Woonsocket, first on Federal Street and because of the facilities and activities it offered, it was deemed an instant success. The building was small, however; and gradual development forced the YWCA to leave Federal Street and move into a three story structure located at 380 Blackstone Street. Growing out of that space the YWCA built a new facility in 1967 and moved to our present location, 514 Blackstone Street.

hallmark programs

our mission

YWCA Northern Rhode Island is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

Hallmark Priorities:

Racial Justice

Women's Economic Advancement

There are many approaches employed by YWCAs nationwide to carry out our bold, dual-pronged mission of eliminating racism and empowering women, but two very specific priorities are present in all local Associations:

our YWCA Hallmarks of Racial Justice and Women's Economic Advancement. These are the common threads that unite YWCAs across the country, they reflect our strategic purpose, and they serve as a YWCA distinction.

YWCA Hallmark initiatives are designed to have a direct and measurable impact throughout the YWCA and are often complimented by the YWCA's daily programs and services.

racial justice



Through community advocacy, collaborations and strategic planning, YWCA Northern Rhode Island brings into view the ways in which jobs, working conditions, education, housing, social inclusion and even political power influence individual and community health. Emphasis is placed on how societal resources are distributed unequally by class and by race, and how that affects one's health.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island 2009 health equity efforts include:

- Culturally and linguistically appropriate programming focusing on health literacy, nutrition and obesity prevention, tobacco cessation, heart health, breast and cervical health, management of chronic diseases, self-advocacy, connecting people to services and community building. (This effort received recognition as an outstanding community based program from Quality Health Partners of Rhode Island, a nationally recognized leader in health care quality improvement.)

- Dedication of an edition of *She Shines* magazine to the topic minority health. (This effort has resulted in our association receiving the prestigious Metcalf Award for diversity in journalism. These awards are presented by Rhode Island for Community and Justice, a social justice organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism, and promoting understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education.)

- Rhode Island Department of Health designated “Minority Health Promotion Center” which serves as a focal point for health education, information and risk reduction activities within the minority community.

- Compilation of a neighborhood needs assessment to assist in planning community-based initiatives, which address chronic disease and health disparities in Woonsocket’s Constitution Hill/Fairmount neighborhood.

- Workshop presenter, 6th New England Minority Health Conference. The mission of the New England Minority Health Conference is to create a dynamic forum to develop strategies to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island also offers general programs and events, through collaborative partnerships, which bring awareness to racial justice and promotes equity throughout our community. Our 2009 programs include:

- Funda Fest: A celebration of Black storytelling hosted by YWCA Northern Rhode Island. A program of Rhode Island Black Storytellers, Funda means to teach and to learn in the African languages Zulu and Kiswahili.

- *Unnatural Causes*: YWCA Northern Rhode Island community conversation series utilizing the award winning documentary *Unnatural Causes* to explore America’s racial and socioeconomic inequities in health.

women's economic advancement



YWCA Young Voices members (Woonsocket Chapter) participate in a health summit. Through open dialogue, over 80 individuals including adolescents, service providers, community leaders, school personnel and social service professionals share their thoughts and concerns about youth access to health services. This is just one example of YWCA programs geared to help women develop skills for career success.

Through YWCA economic advancement programs, women are able to transform their lives by participating in a variety of educational programs and services that focus on new beginnings, employment training and career opportunities.

The YWCA is committed to helping women of all ages and backgrounds achieve long-term social and financial security. YWCA Northern Rhode Island 2009 programs which help women succeed in life and in the world of work include:

- Young Voices: Preparing young women for the world of work, advocacy and self-reliance.
- PIP-RITA: A Pathway to Success for Teen Mothers and Their Children.
- Wi\$eUp: Financial education for Generation X & Y women.
- Summer Growth: Opportunities for traditional female high school students who have missed class due to pregnancy and/or childbirth to recapture academic credits necessary for high school graduation.
- Girls in Non-Traditional Trades: Annual women's organization partnership event that invites middle and high school girls to explore careers in non-traditional trades such as carpenters, electricians, bricklayers through hands on experience.
- Women's Political Empowerment: Workshops and events that encourage women to become involved in the political process and position themselves to advocate on behalf of women.
- Golf League: Teaching women how to network through the game of golf.
- Girls Gymnastics Academy: Teaching necessary leadership skills to succeed in the world of work including team building, discipline, self-confidence, completion and leadership. Many young women graduate from the academy and become YWCA gymnastic instructors.
- Job search preparation: Assistance finding the right job, resume writing and interview skill preparation.
- Computer Literacy: Basic computer skills and literacy.
- *She Shines* magazine: An on-line and direct mail publication which celebrates the aspirations and accomplishments of women, offers female business owners opportunity to self-promote and is a resource for economic advancement.
- Support services for working women: Childcare for children 6 weeks to age 5, afterschool care for children grade K-7, physical fitness classes, health information and resources, and personal development workshops and classes.

spotlight

women holding office



Rhode Island's female elected officials gathered to support and celebrate one another at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln during the month of March as part of the YWCA Northern Rhode Island observance of Women's History Month. With the elected officials are YWCA Northern Rhode Island executive director Deborah Perry, center right, and Victoria Budson, founding executive director Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard's Kennedy School, center left.

Women Holding Office, a rally call for women to come together, support one another and become part of the political process.

More than 130 women including 27 Rhode Island female leaders (Democrats, independents, a Republican, town office holders, a tribal council member, state representatives and the lieutenant governor) gathered at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln for the YWCA Women Holding Office event.

The keynote speaker Victoria A. Budson, founder and executive director of the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School, called on all those present to seek elected office or support others who do so, and cited the research of former Brown

University political science professor Jennifer Lawless, which Budson said shows that when women run, they are elected as often as men. Budson emphasized that women should seek office not simply because of equality, but because of the bread-and-butter issues they prioritize that appeal to female as well as male voters.

Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts, the state's top-ranking female elected official, also spoke and underscored the need for more women to become involved in the political process in Rhode Island.

Event partners were the League of Women Voters of Rhode Island, Center for Women & Enterprise, and the Rhode Island Commission on Women.

spotlight

women of achievement



Surrounded by family, friends and colleagues, Clarice Thompson, center, received a 2009 YWCA Woman of Achievement Award for her work eliminating racism. "I seek first to understand and encourage all I come in contact with to do the same. My personal method of empowerment is through music . . . reaching peace through music."

The 5th Annual YWCA Northern Rhode Island Women of Achievement Awards, which publicly honor the efforts of women who have helped to improve the lives of women, girls and people of color, provided opportunity for 14 women to share their accomplishments and triumphs during a luncheon event.

The 2009 Women of Achievement award winners include:

- Clarice L. Thompson, music educator and composer; artist in residence at the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School;
- Shanna Wells, director, Rhode Island Commission on Women;
- Margaret "Digit" Murphy, Brown University women's head hockey coach;
- State Representative Donna M. Walsh, D-Charlestown;
- Lisa Bergeron, motivational speaker and president of Leading Women SENE;
- Yvonne Freeman, medical management team leader, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island;
- Paige Clausius-Parks, advisor and teacher at the Met Center;
- Kathleen A. Taylor, co-chairwoman for Healthy Families Initiative at the Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement;
- Nancy Rafi, executive director of the Rhode Island Crisis Center;
- Ana Giron, director of victim services for the Department of Attorney General;
- Tracy C. Baran, counselor-at-law at Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP; board member for the R.I. Women's Bar Association;
- Mary-Kim Arnold, executive director of the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities;
- Valerie Tutson, executive director of the Rhode Island Black Storytellers; and
- Karen Feldman, co-director of Young Voices.

spotlight

supporting young families and reducing the rates of teen pregnancy



YWCA Parenting in Progress teen mothers and their children.

Core to our mission, YWCA Northern Rhode Island leads community efforts and programs to reduce the rates of teen pregnancy, and encourage teen mothers to develop the knowledge, interest and confidence to pursue whatever profession they choose.

Through programs such as YWCA Northern Rhode Island's Parenting in Progress, teen mothers and their children are provided a community wide continuum of care beginning with learning the basic skills of how to care and provide for a child, obtaining public services as required, education advancement, and connecting with employers to provide an opportunity for higher wages, better benefits and a better

life for themselves, their children and future generations. Forty-three women benefitted from our program during the traditional academic school year, an additional 20 women attended summer programming.

As fiscal agent for Rhode Island Teen Pregnancy Coalition, and with support from the Rhode Island Foundation, YWCA Northern Rhode Island is taking the leadership role in creating a statewide comprehensive plan for teen pregnancy prevention. The mission of the 41 member coalition is to reduce rates of unwanted pregnancy among teens in Rhode Island and to support pregnant and parenting teens and their children to optimize health and educational outcomes.

spotlight

Parenting in Progress

Since 1984, YWCA Northern Rhode Island has offered the Parenting in Progress program as a comprehensive alternative education program in collaboration with various agencies.

The program strives to provide young mothers the knowledge and skills needed for independent living. Parenting in Progress not only addresses academic education, but also includes an extensive parenting, life skills and job training component.

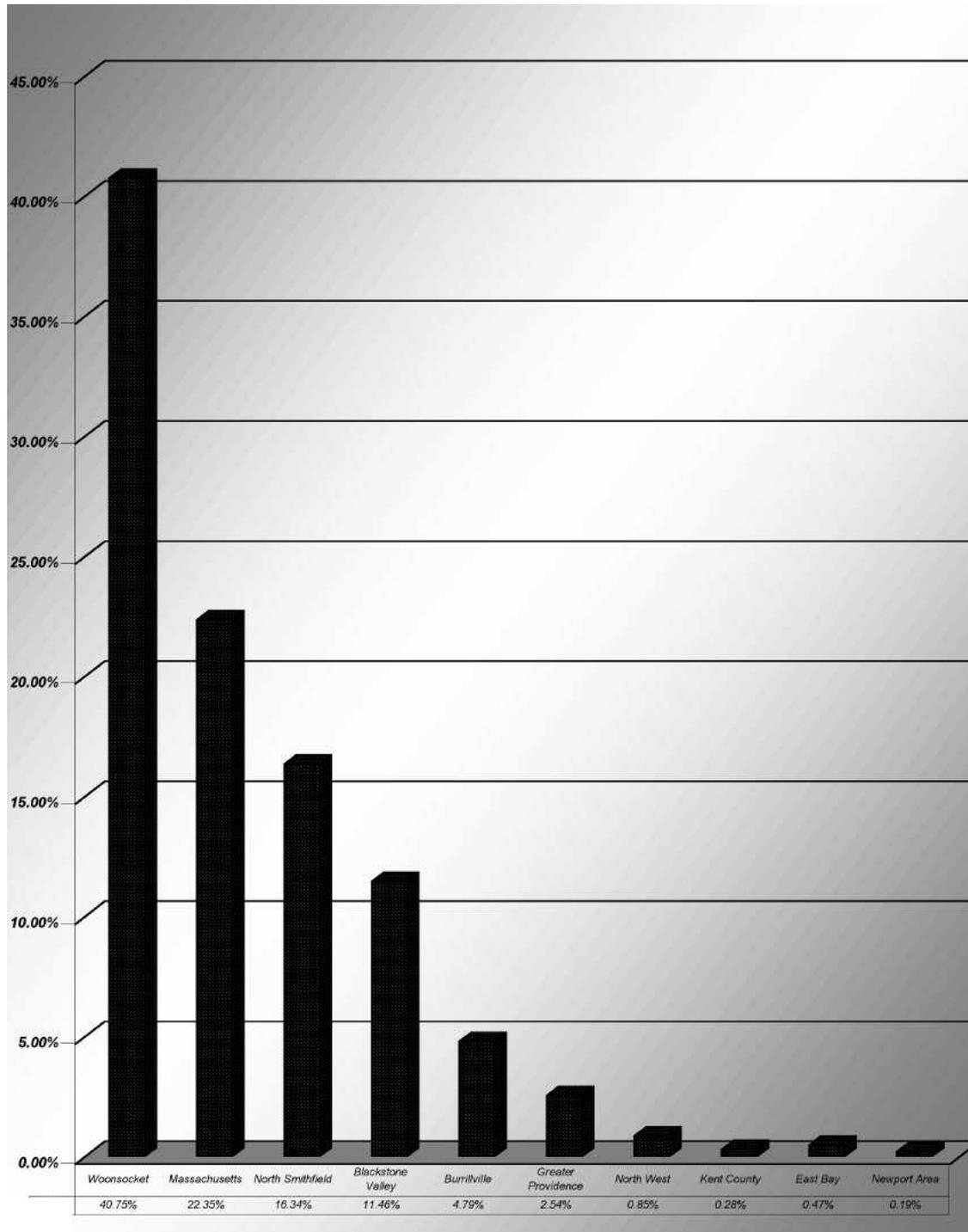
2008-2009

Participant Accomplishments:

- 43 women participated in the program
- 192 weeks combined total of perfect program attendance
- 532 hours combined perfect attendance
- 300 hours combined Young Voices Youth Leadership workshops
- 34 women obtained Parents as Teachers mentor/coaches
- 29 women attended 30 hours of parenting workshops
- 30 women attended 30 hours of anger management
- 23 women students participated in nutrition classes
- 19 women participated in tobacco cessation classes
- 39 women did not have a repeat pregnancy
- 28 women participated in choke saving / first aid workshop
- 43 women received life skills training
- 43 women received pre/post natal health care
- 17 women obtained resources to help them leave self-identified abusive relationships
- 11 women obtained early intervention services
- 16 women used the YWCA workout room
- 19 women volunteered at a local church putting together holiday baskets
- 10 women received their GED, 18 continued progresses toward GED attainment
- 10 women obtained employment
- 36 women attended contraception/STI workshops
- 22 women attended workshops conducted by state of RI Child Support Services
- 30 women attended Youth Pride workshops
- 30 women attended Sojourner House workshops
- 36 women ate a nutritious noontime meal

membership service area

YWCA - the oldest, largest women's movement in the nation. Members have a voice, strong and united, supporting women's rights, opposing racism, creating greater public awareness of social and political issues affecting women: equity, economic security, child care, issues affecting youth, women's health and peace.



donors



Business and Corporate Support

146 Auto Repair
Advantage Payroll
Amazing Women, Deb Ruggiero
Apres Midi Club
Asia Grill
Bank Rhode Island
Beef Barn
Big Sisters of Rhode Island
Box Seats
Braver PC
Elaine Carvelli, Ocean State Financial Services
Century 21 Butterman & Kryston
Chans
Connecticut Sun WNBA
CRM Modular Homes
CROWN TROPHY of Smithfield
CVS Caremark
D'Agostino Sealcoating & Stripping
East Side Chiropractic Health Center
Ellie's Pro Shop
Fernandes Produce
Festival Ballet Providence
Foster Country Club
Frito-Lay
Susan Gershkoff, Esq.
Hair 4 U
Hair We Are
Hi-Line Cruises
John Pietropaoli Co-Ed Volleyball League
Michael E. Kiley, CXS Corp.
Leading Women of Southeastern New England
LGC&D
Lincoln Country Club

Lyndy's Tavern
Maral Sales & Paper
Melody Hill Country Club
Mystic Seaport
Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame
National Baseball Hall of Fame
Nationwide Construction
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
New England Patriots
Newport Mansions
Omega Medical Research
Opportunities Unlimited, Inc.
Panera Bread
Park Square Florist, Inc.
Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP
Providence Children's Museum
Quota International of Woonsocket
Rhode Island Commission on Women
Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement
Rhode Island Black Storytellers
Rhode Island State Nurses Association
Roger Williams Park Zoo
Rotary Club of Woonsocket
RPM Voices of RI
Seven Star Bakery
Swarovski
Tee Off For Tots
Teixeira Financial Group
The Met Center
The Roast House
The University of Rhode Island
Thundermist Health Center
Until the Violence STOPS: Providence
The Westin Hotel

Westport River Winery
Wheelock Insurance Agency
Woonsocket Prevention Coalition
Woonsocket Rotary Club
Woonsocket Teachers Guild
Wrights Dairy
Ye Olde English Fish & Chip

Foundation Support

Alice Gertrude Lothrop Lincoln Fund
Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund
Billy Andrade / Brad Faxon Foundation
Champlin Foundations
CVS Caremark
Emma G. Harris Foundation
Levy Foundation
National Institute of Health
Nellie Mae Education Foundation
Providence Journal Summertime Fund
The Rhode Island Foundation
United Way of Rhode Island
Young Voices

Elected Officials and Government Support

Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch
State of Rhode Island Department of Health

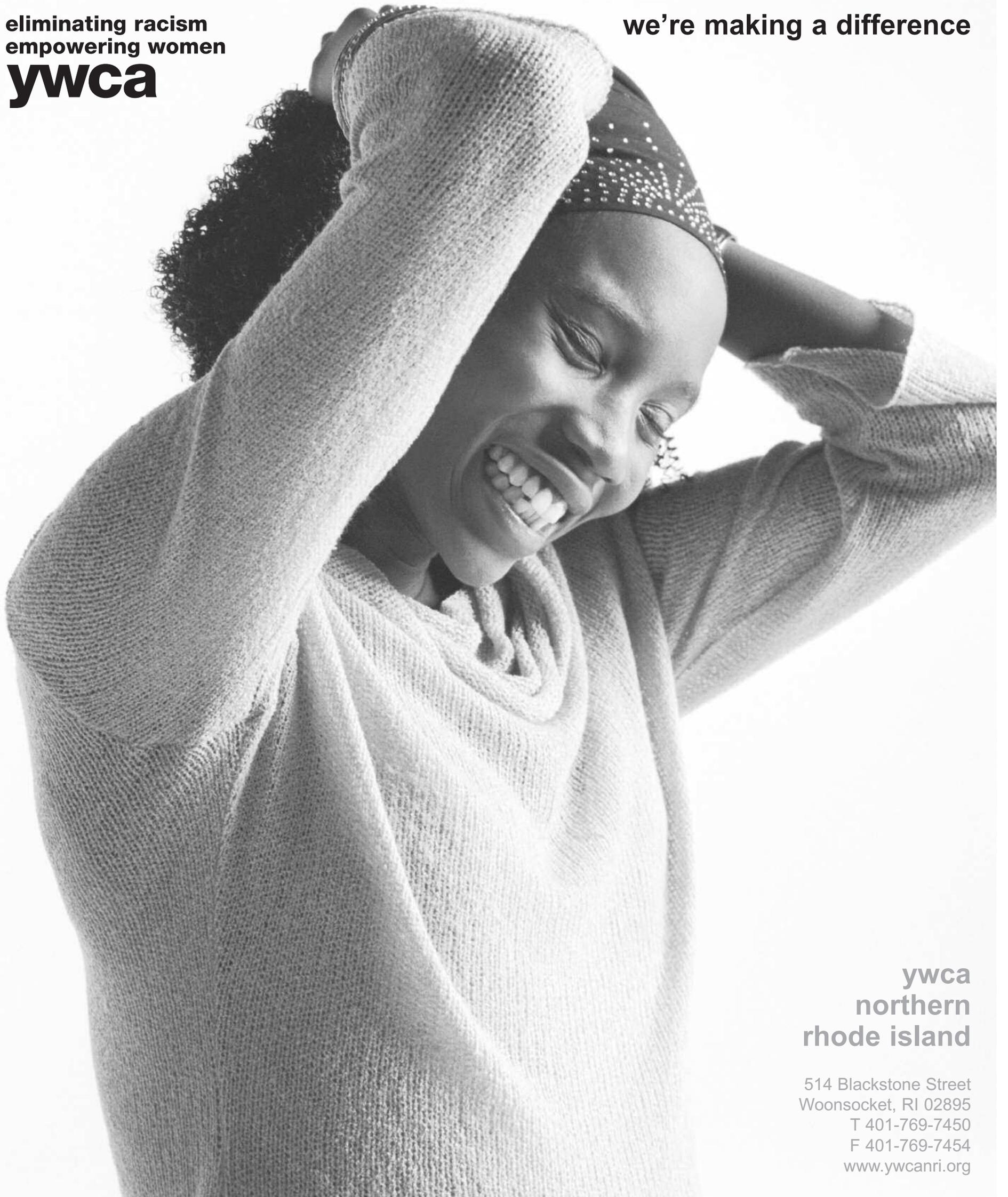
Individual Support

Hundreds of Individual Supporters

YWCA Northern Rhode Island thanks the generous individual, corporate and foundation donors who make our programs possible.

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

we're making a difference



ywca
northern
rhode island

514 Blackstone Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
T 401-769-7450
F 401-769-7454
www.ywcanri.org

april calendar

● April 1, Family Health Insurance

Luncheon: Information, referrals and resources. Right Care, Right Now, Right Near You presented by Neighborhood Health Plan of RI. Begins at 11:30am at YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Register with Joyce Dolbec at 769-7450.

● April 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, Consultas

Gratis con la Enfermera: Free consultations with a bilingual nurse. Free health screenings and personalized health information. From 9am-1pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. Make an appointment with Wendy Moronta, 467-0111.

● April 5, Free Health Screenings with Lifespan Health Community Services:

From 5-7pm at Alfred Lima Elementary School, 234 Daboll Street, Providence. Contact Petra Cintron, 467-0111.

● April 6, Know the Difference - Hospice vs Palliative Care:

YWCA Northern Rhode Island and Woonsocket Cancer Control Task Force members will present this workshop for patients, families and healthcare professional. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society will provide free CEU's for professionals. Information, referrals and resources from 5-7pm at Landmark Medical Center, 115 Cass Ave, Woonsocket. Register with Joyce Dolbec at 769-7450.

● April 6, Salud para su Corazon / Health for your Heart:

Learn about the risk factors that put you at risk for cardiovascular diseases and find out how to become a member of El Club de la Salud / Health Club. From 6-8pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. Contact Petra Cintron, 467-0111.

● April 8, Healthy Families:

From 11am-12:30pm at The Genesis Center, Room 12. Challenges attendees to move toward a healthy life and samples of healthy food cooked by participants in the workshop "Tomando Control de su Diabetes" will be served in the class rooms. Contact Rita Silva, 781-6110.

● April 8, Minority Health Walk Kickoff:

From 1-3pm at The Providence Center. Contact Jetzabel Mills, 276-6176.

● April 9, Amiga a Amiga Training:

Training on the importance of breast cancer early detection. Training presented by the Latino Cancer Control Task Force. From 9am-1pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue. Contact Martica Quintero, 467-2507.

● April 10, Cambodian New Year

Celebration: Celebration of Cambodian New Year. Providing health screenings at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet from 11am-2pm. Contact Ammala Duoangsavanh, 277-3637.

● April 10, Diabetes Awareness Day:

Speakers Glen Prescodd, MD; Carrie Bridges; BC/BS of RI; and Neighborhood Health Plan of RI. From 10am-3pm at Urban League of RI, 246 Prairie Avenue. Contact Debra Christal, 383-8114.

● April 12, 26 and 28, Job Well Done:

Diabetic support groups at the Family Van, 908 Eddy Street, Providence. Contact Yanery Garcia Cabral, 274-1122.

● April 14, Providence Housing Authority Health Fair:

Provide free health information and screenings for the elderly/disabled residents in the housing authority. From 1-3pm at 100 Atwells Avenue, Providence, Sister Dominica Manor (High Rise). Contact Bartola Ovalles, 709-6405.

● April 14, New Directions for Blood

Cancer Therapies: Free. At Roger Williams Medical Center from 5:30-7:30pm. Register with Gloria Hincapie, 943-8888.

● April 15, Cambodian New Year:

From 1-4pm at The Providence Center. Contact Jetzabel Mills, 276-6176.

● April 16, Women & Infants Family Van:

In Woonsocket from 10am-2pm. Call Joyce Dolbec for details, 769-7450.

● April 17, Cambodian New Year

Celebration: Celebration of Cambodian New Year. Providing health screenings at Wat Dhamagosnaram, 2870 Plainfield Pike, Cranston from 11am-2pm Contact Ammala Duoangsavanh, 277-3637.

● April 17, 10th Annual Family Hearing and Health Screening Fair:

Free. Health and wellness sessions, blood drive, nutrition and CPR demonstrations, walking club, information, referrals, resources and door prizes from 10am-2pm at Elk's Hall, 280 Social Street, Woonsocket. Contact Joyce Dolbec at 769-7450.

● April 17, Working Rhode Island Health Fair:

For Rhode Islanders who are uninsured and underinsured with various screenings and

testing (blood pressure, BMI, Cholesterol, Glucose, Vision, Hep C., Audiology) as well as information and referrals to medical services across the state. From 10am-4pm at Providence Career and Technical Academy. Contact John Killooy, 456-9137.

● April 17, Urban League of RI Health Fair:

Focused on all areas of health from smoking sensation to diabetes and heart disease. From 10am-2pm at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Contact Nicole Pope or Linda Delgado, 351-5000.

● April 18, Cambodian New Year

Celebration: Celebration of Cambodian New Year. Providing health screenings at Wat Buddhist Center of NE, 157-159 West Clifford Street, Providence from 11am-2pm Contact Ammala Duoangsavanh, 277-3637.

● April 20, HIV Rapid Testing:

Free HIV Rapid Testing. Be aware of your status will participate in an education session presented by MAP Outreach from 5-7pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. Contact Petra Cintron, 467-0111.

● April 22, Minority Health Fair:

From 1-3pm at The Providence Center. Contact Jetzabel Mills 276-6176.

● April 24, CHisPA Health Fair:

Providing screenings beginning at 11am. Contact Mary Falvey for details and location, 467-0111.

● April 24, Beyond Borders Conference:

From 9-2pm at International Institute of RI. Conference to explore legal, political, economic, educational and healthcare opportunities and challenges facing immigrants and refugees in RI. Register with Baha Sadr, 784-8611.

● April 24, 13th Annual Health Fair:

Free health screenings, health resources and information in Spanish. Entertainment, refreshments and raffles from 11am-2pm at Elmwood Community Center, 155 Niagara Street, Providence. Contact Carola Campos, 467-0111.

● April 24, Cambodian New Year

Celebration: Celebration of Cambodian New Year. Providing health screenings at WatLao Buddhavath, 88 Limerock Road, Smithfield from 11am-2pm Contact Ammala Duoangsavanh, 277-3637.

● April 25, Work of Our Hands, Hearts and Minds:

From 12-5pm at Peace/Love Studio

and Gallery, 200 Main Street, Pawtucket. Visit www.rhodeisland.hadassah.org.

● April 25, Imagine Walk and Family Fun Day for Autism:

At Goddard Memorial State Park, Warwick beginning at 10am. Visit www.theautismproject.org.

● April 27, Salud para su Corazon / Health for your Heart:

Learn about the risk factors that put you at risk for cardiovascular diseases and find out how to become a member of El Club de la Salud (Health Club). From 6-8pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. Contact Petra Cintron, 467-0111.

● April 27, Everything You Wanted to Know About Lobbying but Were Afraid to Ask:

YWCA Northern Rhode Island in collaboration with the American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network, program provides a core curriculum on lobbying regarding legislation in Rhode Island that pertains to your health. From 6-7:30pm at American Cancer Society, Jefferson Blvd, Warwick. Register with Joyce Dolbec at 769-7450.

● April 27, From Pathology to Proteins - Decoding The Chronic Leukemias:

At The Marriott Hotel, Providence from 5:30-7:30pm. Register with Gloria Hincapie, 943-8888.

● April 27, Where do Uninsured Rhode Islanders go for Services? How will Healthcare Reform have an Effect on the Underserved?:

At Miriam Hospital from 12-2pm. Register with Julie Rawlings, 431-5410 x223.

● April 28, CPR 101 Class:

Discussion, information, referrals and resources. Presented by Lifespan and hosted at YWCA Northern Rhode Island beginning at 7pm. Especially for adults and youth 16 year old or older. Register with Joyce Dolbec at 769-7450.

● April 29, Consultas Gratis con la Nutricionista / Free Consultations with a Nutritionist:

Participate in CHisPA's support group conducted by a bilingual nutritionist from the URI Food Stamp Outreach Program from 6-8pm at CHisPA, 421 Elmwood Avenue, Providence. Contact Petra Cintron, 467-0111.

● April 29, Youth Diversity:

Providing healthcare career information to students of diverse cultural backgrounds. Contact Marguerite McLaughlin at Quality Partners of Rhode Island, 528-3259.



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reception women holding office

May 3, 6-8pm
Kirkbrae Country Club, Lincoln

Keynote Speaker: Melissa Unemori Hampe

Tickets: \$25
Contact: Lisa Piscatelli, 769-7450
Host: YWCA Northern Rhode Island

Partners: Big Sisters of Rhode Island,
Center for Women & Enterprise
and League of Women Voters



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