

*In  
this  
Issue*      *Upcoming Racial Justice Programs  
A YWCA Student Returns To Share Her Story  
Cooking In The Kitchen On A Budget*

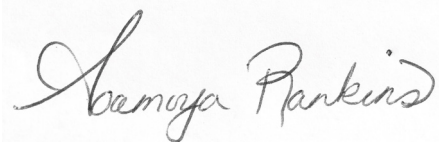
## Dear YWCA Family and Friends:

As we approach the 118th anniversary of our YWCA in this community, we pause to reflect on women and girls we first met years ago. Doris called recently, to say it had been fifteen years since she was a part of “Women In Transition,” but that she remains free from addiction and earned her certification in substance abuse counseling. She is now working in the field and helping others to find the hope and help that has sustained her.

In this issue, you will read about Ashley, once a little girl in our youth programs over twenty years ago, now a human resources specialist at a partner non-profit. She writes, “I am comforted to know that a program that meant so much to me as a child is still being handled with authenticity and love. The woman I strive to be is a culmination of great examples I’ve encountered over time, and I am indebted to the YWCA leaders that helped raise me during those formative years. Leaders like that inspire a revolving impact, encouraging women like me to show up in the world the way others have shown up for us as children. It matters and we never forget.”

New women. Same mission. Ever evolving.

In solidarity,



Soamoya N. Rankins  
Board President



Kirsten D. Sikkelee  
Chief Executive Officer

## Women of Achievement 2019

In October, we held our annual Women of Achievement and Donor Recognition event to thank donors who continue to support our mission and honor the work of three outstanding women in Charlotte. Each woman represents a different generation, embodying the mission of YWCA.

The Pioneer Award, honoring a mature woman who exemplifies a lifetime commitment to promoting social justice, went to Kathy IZard. Kathy’s contribution to social justice began as a volunteer at Urban Ministry Center where she found her calling to make a significant impact on chronic homelessness in Charlotte. In 2007, she quit her graphic design business and started a project to find homes for the homeless, raising

over \$10 million to help build Moore Place, Charlotte’s first “Housing First” supportive housing building.

The Community Champion Award, honoring an established woman working at the forefront of social change, went to Patrice Funderburg. Patrice is the founder and chief visionary of Educate To Engage, a social justice advisory services company with a vision to end institutional racism through education, exposure, and engagement. She’s also a member of the Center for Community Transitions and the Women’s Impact Fund.

The Emerging Leader Award, honoring a woman under the age of 35 who will lead our community forward, went to



Natalie Marles. Natalie is committed to impacting social justice by merging her work life as a paralegal advocate for Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy and personal life working for the needs of the community as part of several community organizations. She works to connect the Latinx community with the greater Charlotte-Mecklenburg community and targets specific issues that need short- and long-term attention.

## Healthy Cooking On A Budget

In the center of YWCA Central Carolinas’ Park Road facility is a kitchen, bustling with the creation of healthy foods prepared by Beverly McLaughlin and her team, Beverly’s Gourmet Foods. They create gourmet dishes that span gluten free, vegetarian and vegan meals, but Beverly isn’t just cooking with her team.

The monthly workshop, “Healthy Cooking on a Budget,” equips participants of YWCA’s Women In Transition



program with budget friendly recipes and useful cooking techniques. Beverly leads each class and instructs the participants, demonstrating how to create a week’s worth of meals.

“I wanted to show you something easy,” Beverly said as she began to show participants how to prepare an orange apple cider vinaigrette, “with items that you would have on hand. And you could make this quickly at night after work.”

The workshops cap at ten transitional housing participants, ensuring that each woman is able to ask questions about the recipe and cooking process for that month’s class. In November, the class focused on what ingredients are needed to make an organic spinach salad and chicken curry with roasted vegetables

over rice.

Tips on how to best cut bell peppers, techniques for chopping onions, and how long food can be stored in a refrigerator are shared, as well as personal stories and inquiries on what participants would like to make next. After the food is created, Beverly sets dishes in front of each attendee and the group shares a meal with each other, building more community among them.



Beverly’s Gourmet Foods can be purchased from the cooler in YWCA’s lobby, as well as local farmer’s markets, Earth Fare, Whole Foods, and Reid’s.

# Fitness Highlights - Winter

See more offerings online at [www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org](http://www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org)

## Crushing a Fear of Water

A fear of water is a pretty common thing, but overcoming that fear can be easier than you think. Dylan McDonnell had a fear of pools until she was six years old, but this didn't stop her from attending swim lessons at YWCA Central Carolinas. Though she was intimidated by the size of the pool, Dylan seemed to thrive in her private lessons at the age of three; so much so that after a year of lessons the swim instructor recommended she join the Orange Crush swim team.

"I was four years old," Dylan said. "Back then the team only had 25 swimmers and I was the youngest. But I loved it and I haven't stopped since. I like to say that Orange Crush is my winter tradition."

Today, Dylan supports the Orange Crush swim team as a team mate and a coach. She competes in her age bracket and coaches swimmers in the 7 and 8 year old age group, and even works as a swim instructor for YWCA Central Carolinas. Her name remains on the record board above the pool, showing just how much one can conquer their fears.



Dylan McDonnell Coaching a Swimmer

"Because I had such a fear of the pool and I was able to get past that to realize how much I loved it, I want to share that with other people," Dylan said. "And being able to see a swimmer progress is so fulfilling. You'll get a kid who's terrified of water when you meet him and then five lessons later he's swimming on his own and you'll think to yourself, 'Wow, I did that.'"

This winter marks her 14th year on the Orange Crush swim team. Dylan hopes to compete and coach one more time next winter as an 18 year old, while attending UNC Charlotte double majoring in Social Work and Human Services Management.

## New Adult Swim Class: Master Your Swim

Join Industrial Strength Fitness for this new adult swim program, designed as a structured team style workout, for all swim levels 18 years and older.

It's not about how fast you are – experience Industrial Strength Fitness expert coaching, technique instruction, camaraderie, and more! The aim is to have fun while focusing on efficiency, endurance and speed with structured workouts designed for three different swim types: fitness swimming, competitive swimming, and triathlon swimming.

The program **starts January 14** and **ends March 31**, meeting on **Tuesdays from 6:30pm-7:30pm**. You can register for the full 12 weeks for \$100, drop-in to 5 classes for \$50, or drop-in to an individual class for \$15. Questions? Contact Jody Frazier at [ydubtriclub@gmail.com](mailto:ydubtriclub@gmail.com)

You can register at [www.industrialstrengthfitness.com/classes](http://www.industrialstrengthfitness.com/classes)

Although not required, you may bring paddles, fins, snorkels and other gear. Prerequisite is a 100 yard non-stop swim.

### MASTER YOUR SWIM

This Adult Swim Program is designed as a fun swim team style workout for all levels of swimmers 18yrs and older:  
3 workout styles available each practice:  
\*Fitness \*Triathlon \*Competitive

**TUESDAYS 6:30PM**  
**JANUARY 14 - MARCH 31**

Payment Options:  
12 Classes PIF: \$100  
5 Class Drop-In: \$50  
Single Class Drop-In: \$15

Questions:  
[ydubtriclub@gmail.com](mailto:ydubtriclub@gmail.com)  
Register or More info:  
[www.industrialstrengthfitness.com/classes](http://www.industrialstrengthfitness.com/classes)

**INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH FITNESS**  
3420 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209

## January's Wellness Seminar: Emotional Eating

Start the new year on the right foot and attend a YWCA seminar. January is Mental and Emotional Health Month, so we'll be discussing the importance of mindful eating.

We all grab that piece of chocolate when we are feeling a little down or stressed. We ask ourselves why certain foods make us feel happier.

This seminar will be on **January 9 from 11am - 12pm in YWCA's Boardroom.**

Registration is \$10! You can register on the Fitness Programs page of our site: [www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org/fitness/special-programs/](http://www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org/fitness/special-programs/)

## February's Wellness Seminar: American Heart Month

How can you prevent and manage cardiovascular disease? How do high cholesterol and high blood pressure affect the heart and brain? Starr, our Director of Fitness and a clinical exercise therapist, will discuss what cholesterol numbers really mean, how high blood pressure affects your heart and arteries and how exercise can lower both. Profile by Sanford will discuss what foods raise or help lower your cholesterol and blood pressure.

This seminar will take place on **February 13 from 11am - 12pm** in YWCA's Boardroom. Registration is \$10! Questions? Contact Director of Fitness, Starr Gargiullo, at [sgargiullo@ywcacentralcarolinas.org](mailto:sgargiullo@ywcacentralcarolinas.org)

### group exercise and aquatics schedule - Pool is open to all YWCA members during swim lessons.

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	
8am - 8:50am Deep Water Work	8am - 8:50am Deep Water Work	8am - 8:50am Deep Water Work	8am - 8:50am Deep Water Work	8am - 8:50am Deep Water Work		<p>★ Pop Up Classes continue so that you may try new classes! View classes on the website via the monthly event calendar.</p> <p>★ Visit the website for details on Swim Lessons!</p> <p>Pool Hours Mon-Thurs 5:45am - 8pm Fri 5:45am - 7pm Sat 8 am - 4:45pm Sun 1pm - 4:45pm</p> <p>12:00pm - 1:00pm Mon-Fri Additional Lap Lane</p> <p>Childcare Hours Mon-Thurs 9am - 12pm &amp; 5pm - 7pm Fri 9am - 12pm Sat 9am - 12pm</p> <p>Get our email updates! sgargiullo@ywca centralcarolinas.org</p>
9am - 9:50am Shallow Water Work	9:10am - 10am Aqua Arthritis Energizer	9am - 9:50am Deep Water Work		9am - 9:45am Move & Groove	9:15am - 10am Cycle Class	
9am - 9:45am Move & Groove		9am - 9:50am Move & Groove	9:15am - 10:15am Aqua Yoga	9:10am - 9:50am Shallow Water Work	10am - 11:20am Yoga I: Exploring the Details	
10am - 10:55am Aqua Power		10am - 10:55am Aqua Power Shallow & Deep	10:30am - 11:25am Yoga I/II	10am - 10:50am Aqua Power Shallow	10:15am - 11am Cardio Strength	
10am - 10:55am HiRIT	10:30am - 11:45am Align & Refine Yoga	10am - 10:55am Pilates Fusion		10am - 10:30am HIIT		
11am - 11:45am Cardio Kickboxing				10am - 10:55am Pilates		
12pm - 1pm Love to Lift	12pm - 12:45pm Tabata	12pm - 1pm Love to Lift	12pm - 12:45pm Tone/Stretch/Cycle	10:35am - 10:50am Quick Abs		
5:25pm - 6:10pm Cycle Class	5:25pm - 6:10pm Cycle Class		5:25pm - 6:10pm Cycle Class	12pm - 1pm Love to Lift		
5:45pm - 6:40pm Tabata	5:35pm - 6:25pm Deep Water Work	6pm - 6:55pm HIIT				
6pm - 6:55pm Vinyasa Yoga II/III	6pm - 6:45pm Zumba	6pm - 6:55pm Vinyasa Yoga II/III	6pm - 6:55pm Yoga I			
	6pm - 6:55pm Yoga I			<b>Orange Crush Swim Season runs January through March. Check the Aquatics Calendar for daily pool activity!</b>	Like and follow <b>YWCA Fitness</b> on Facebook to stay in the know about everything fitness!	

Soamoya Rankins, president

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Patricia Zoder

Sarah Belk Gambrell, board member emeritus

Kirsten D. Sikkelee, chief executive officer

## On The Table CLT

On October 23, hundreds of community members, including YWCA Central Carolinas, participated in On The Table CLT. On The Table is a community-wide civic engagement initiative that consists of mealtime dialogues hosted in workplaces, libraries, homes and other community locations. This year's theme, "Finding Home: Where Do I Belong?" focused on Indigenous People and what it means to "belong."



YWCA Central Carolinas' CEO, Kirsten Sikkelee, Leading On Opportunity's Executive Director, Stephanie Cooper-Lewter, and this year's artist, Nico Amortegui, were featured on WCCB's Wilson's World to talk about the event. You can view the segment at <https://www.wccbcharlotte.com/>

## Growing Up and Giving Back

In 1997, a young second grader walked in to YWCA's Sunridge Youth Learning Center and didn't know what to expect. She was coming from a single-parent home, her father having been incarcerated since she was six months old, suffering from childhood depression, and only felt comfortable having close relationships with her cousins and other family members. She didn't know how much her life was going to change through YWCA.



Her name was Ashley Jackson, and she stayed at the Sunridge Youth Learning Center for four more years, until she aged out of the program. During her time there she flourished, breaking out of her shell and building new friendships with her classmates – some of whom she is still in contact with today.

"I remember having a sense of ownership," she said. "Even as a child, I felt trusted to create something and then present it to others."

Ashley says that YWCA's Youth Learning Center changed her life. The classroom provided a safe place to look forward to and work for. Without YWCA's program she probably wouldn't have been exposed to a lot of things like the field trips to Atlanta, visiting Martin Luther King Jr.'s home, leading a dance group for a talent show, but most of all, feeling seen by the Center Coordinators.

"My best memories from childhood were in the center," she recalls. "Even though it was a short period of time, it seems a lot longer because I gained so much. It was such a rich experience for me."

Today she's paying it forward. Inspired by the empowering black female teachers in her youth, she works at Girls on the Run as the Human Resources Coordinator and is currently coaching a group of students at a Title I Middle School, investing in students the way she felt invested in at Sunridge.

## YWCA's Impact

In the fall of 2018, after moving to the United States from Jamaica, Antwane enrolled in YWCA Billingsville/Cotswold Youth Learning Center. He was in second grade but reading on a kindergarten level and had limited understanding of many English words and phrases. Early in the school year after an in-school vision exam, the nurse discovered that Antwane needed eyeglasses. The school would not be able to help Antwane until late January and his family could not afford to buy him eyeglasses.

The school's nurse reached out to our Billingsville/Cotswold Youth Learning Center Coordinator, Gwen, to ask for support in any way. Gwen called our Youth Program's Family Support Coordinator whose sole job it is to connect our children's families to community resources. Our Coordinator knew of a program through LensCrafters that provides free eyeglasses to children in low-income households and Antwane was able to get his new pair of eyeglasses right away.

At the end of the school year, after reading instruction from our program and new eyeglasses, Antwane went from reading on a kindergarten grade level to reading on a mid-second grade level! The results from the i-Ready diagnostic testing were phenomenal as Antwane's level of reading grew by 99 total points. While typical growth for a student his age is to reach 460 points and exceptional growth is to reach 497 points, Antwane's end of year results totaled 515 points!

## January's Racial Justice Forums



In January, YWCA will partner with CMPD to host a CLEAR (Communication Law Enforcement Actions & Responsibilities) workshop series. These workshops will take place on three separate evenings to provide community members an inside understanding of CMPD's processes, services, and operations.

The mission of the CMPD CLEAR workshop is to work towards strengthening community relationships, increasing the community understanding of police work, as well as equipping citizens to provide productive and meaningful input into how their police department functions.

Each evening, attendees will participate in exercises that put them behind the desk of a captain, in front of a roll call as a sergeant, or behind the body-worn camera of an officer. Along the way, participants will learn about staffing and deployment of officers, crime-fighting and community engagement strategies, arrest, search and use of force laws and policies, accountability and investigation of police misconduct.

The workshops will be held on January 23, January 30, and February 6 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. To attend the workshops, register on our site at [www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org/events-2/](http://www.ywcacentralcarolinas.org/events-2/)

**76%** **Women In Transition**  
Participants who successfully graduated into permanent, affordable housing.

**83%** **Families Together**  
Families who successfully graduated into permanent, affordable housing.

**51%** **Youth Learning Centers**  
At the beginning of the school year, 26% of our students read on or above grade level. By the end of the school year, 51% were reading on or above grade level: an almost double percentage increase.

**Racial Justice**  
YWCA is committed to exposing the systemic and structural forces that create and perpetuate racism. We strive for outcomes of changed attitudes, behaviors, laws, policies, and institutions that better reflect values of inclusion, fairness, and diversity in the Charlotte community.

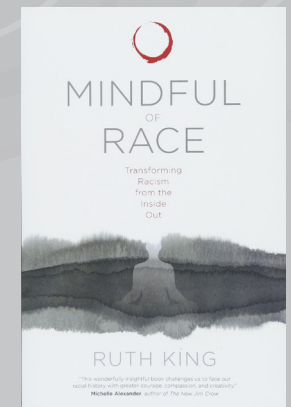
## Supporting YWCA



Thank you to the Philip L. Van Every Foundation for donating \$15,000 to support YWCA's Transitional Housing Programs, Women In Transition and Families Together!



## Save the Date!



February 13 - Book Club  
6pm - 7:30pm @ YWCA  
We're reading Mindful of Race: Transforming Racism from the Inside Out by Ruth King, facilitated by the author!

Refreshments will be served, please RSVP on our site. To learn more contact Claire Lechtenberg at 908-585-0502 or [clechtenberg@ywcacentralcarolinas.org](mailto:clechtenberg@ywcacentralcarolinas.org)