

# YWhat's Happening @ the YW

WINTER/SPRING 2024



## Thanks to Alcoa Foundation, Smartboard = Smart Girls!

When the Live Y'ers program was initiated in 1991, the primary goals were to encourage high school graduation and to prevent pregnancy for vulnerable girls. In the 30 years since the program began, the goals have expanded to incorporate career exploration, STEM experiences, and contemporary concerns such as cyber safety.

Sadly, the technology used with the elementary age Live Y'ers had not progressed much since those early days. Until recently, much of the technology used in our Live Y'ers program was outdated, unreliable, and out-of-touch with most of our participants. Fortunately, this all changed with a generous grant from the Alcoa Foundation, who donated funds for a complete overhaul of the Live Y'ers technical capabilities.

"Our Alcoa board and site representatives saw this as a wonderful opportunity to work with the YWCA for a worthwhile project that would support an underprivileged population for years to come," said Shannon Frazer, Communications Specialist at Alcoa.

The actual project encompassed many components, and grant funds were used to dramatically enhance technology capabilities in the Live Y'ers room. The project funded a smartboard system, three computer stations, software, 20 iPads, iPad pencils, protective cases and screen covers, a locking charging cart, and a laptop. Funds were also used for electrical work to support the system, as well as IT installation support and staff training.

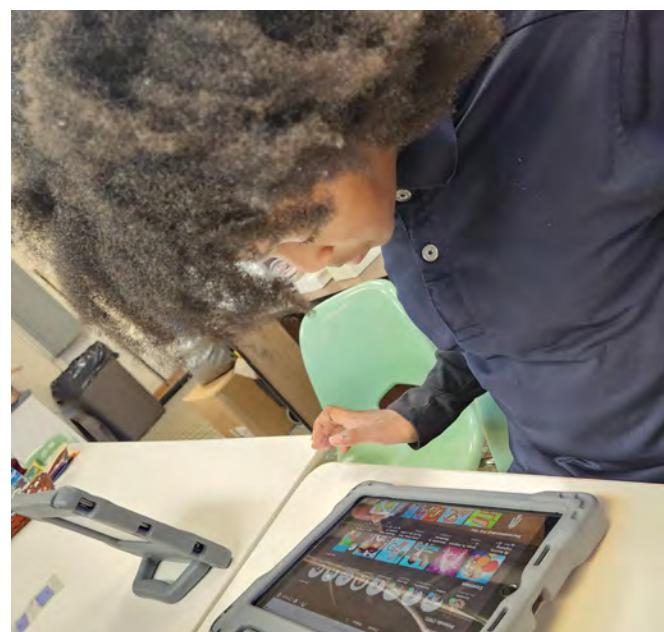


## Thanks to Alcoa Foundation, Smartboard = Smart Girls! cont.

"We know that today's classrooms utilize similar technology in order to engage students and create active learners," said Erika Taylor, YWCA CEO. "Making learning more fun, interactive, collaborative, and impactful sets our elementary girls up for future success." Taylor also mentioned that this equipment will be utilized with the Live Y'ers "summer slide" program, which helps young girls prevent the loss of learning that often occurs during the summer months with vulnerable students.

The reception of the new equipment has been powerful. Each day, our girls run into the room, excited to work on learning projects, experiments, and a variety of activities. Since the equipment is similar to that used at school, there was almost no learning curve involved. YWCA staff, too, have embraced the project with enthusiasm, eager to engage with the Live Y'ers girls in a new way.

Overall, the Live Y'ers program touches on many academic, cultural, peer, and self-empowerment issues. The new technology enhances the instruction of these topics and many others. Getting young girls interested in an eventual career in a STEM-related field is high on the list of current program aims. "We at Alcoa liked that the technology upgrades would not only help elementary schoolers to learn important concepts now, but they would support the larger Live Y'ers mission to promote interest in STEM educational programs and careers in the future," said Frazer. "We would love to see Live Y'ers graduates working at Alcoa some day! We are thrilled at the positive outcomes this project has already achieved." ■



**BODILY AUTONOMY • TRANSPORTATION**

A large, vertical poster for the YWCA Justice campaign. On the left, a woman with long, dark, braided hair is shown from the chest up, looking directly at the viewer. The background behind her is a warm, reddish-orange color. To the right of the woman, the YWCA logo is displayed, consisting of the word "ywca" in a white, sans-serif font, with "eliminating racism" and "empowering women" written above it in smaller white text. Below the logo, a large graphic features the text "UNTIL JUSTICE JUST IS" in a bold, sans-serif font. The word "JUSTICE" is in black, while "JUST IS" is in red. This graphic is set against a white rectangular background with a thick orange border. At the bottom of the graphic, the word "APRIL 2024" is printed in white. The entire poster is framed by a thin white border. Along the very bottom edge, there is a yellow horizontal bar containing the text "BUILDING BRIDGES TO EQUITY" on the left and "JUSTICE.YWCA.ORG" on the right. On the far left and far right edges of the poster, there are vertical columns of text: "BODILY AUTONOMY • TRANSPORTATION" on the left and "FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT • GUN VIOLENCE" on the right, both in a small, white, sans-serif font.

**BUILDING BRIDGES TO EQUITY**

**JUSTICE.YWCA.ORG**

**FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT • GUN VIOLENCE**

# LOVING ME CONFERENCE CONTINUES TO INSPIRE



It was a chilly February morning when nearly 50 young girls from Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Henderson counties came together for the YWCA's annual Loving Me girls' empowerment conference.

Loving Me was the brainchild of a few YWCA board members who wanted to offer girls in the Evansville community the opportunity to engage in activities and discussions that mirror those that we address in the Live Y'ers afterschool program. It was decided that a girls empowerment conference would be a wonderful opportunity for middle school girls in our region to be exposed to a variety of topics in a workshop format conducted by women who look like them.

"Representation is especially important when discussing career exploration. The majority of the workshop presenters and career speakers are women of color. From nurses and educators to STEM professionals and entrepreneurs, Loving Me is a special day where girls can interact with women who inspire them to dream about their futures," said Erika Taylor, YWCA CEO.

Workshops were held on a variety of topics, and the girls enjoyed having their "career exploration passports" stamped at 10 staffed booths. Professionals representing engineering, education, coding, law, nursing, financial planning, social work, news media, and college life were on hand to talk with participants and share their knowledge. "The girls loved how it was set up like speed-dating, except with

a career focus," said Courtney Edwards, Youth Program Director at the YWCA.

Volunteers at the event, including Dacia Fritchley, Environmental Health and Safety Training Lead at Alcoa, enjoyed the day almost as much as the girls. "I loved being part of the event!" said Fritchley. "I explained that we employ a variety of positions at Alcoa that the girls may not be aware of in a manufacturing environment, such as full-time nurses and a full-time communications team that produces our videos and newsletters." Fritchley also explained that the girls asked lots of questions, and it was refreshing to see the power of youth potential that day.

In addition to the career segments, other hands-on activities revolved around journaling, affirmations, social media safety, self-esteem, and other themes. Free lunch, motivational speakers, give-away prizes, and time to make new friends were also part of the day.

"The event was life-affirming," said Taylor. "To be able to tap into the potential of these girls as they begin to plan for their futures is a powerful thing. Volunteer Melissa Morehead Moore said in her speech at the conference, 'A girl with a dream becomes a woman with a vision.' I couldn't agree more." ■



**Hats off to the following for making Loving Me possible!**

**Presenting Sponsor: Alcoa Warrick Operations**

**Venue Sponsor: Ivy Tech Community College**

**The many, many volunteers and staff who worked tirelessly to bring the event to life and keep it running smoothly**

# DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The YWCA is fortunate to have many caring donors to brighten the days of our clients and to provide crucial necessities as the women and children we serve rebuild their lives. Shown are just a few of our friends who have opened their hearts to us in a variety of ways.



Pictured top to bottom: Our Live Y'ers girls are reaping the benefits of a book collection that was put together by the Girl Scout troop in Ireland, Indiana. The troop bundled the books in groups of five and dropped them off at YWCA Evansville to be used as incentive prizes for Live Y'ers participants. Shown in the photo are (clockwise from back left) troop leader Jade Wehr, assistant Angie Buffenbarger, Girl Scout Sarah Wehr, and Sarah's sister, Mackenzie. ■ In her role as Miss Teen Black Indiana International Ambassador, Aja Warren hosted a reverse purse party and collected donations to fill new or gently used purses with much needed hygiene items and self-care essentials. Her mother, Tameka Warren, along with friends, family, and community members came together to provide hope bags for YWCA's clients. Pictured here with YWCA CEO, Erika Taylor, Aja Warren's purses were a huge hit with our clients! ■ For many years, Gerling Law has provided holiday gift bags for our residents, and this year was no exception. The highly anticipated red bags included all the essentials for winter self-care this year including body wash, lotion, bar soap, matching hat, scarf, and glove set, cocoa, and a Gerling Law mug. We cannot thank the incredible team at Gerling Law enough for helping our residents feel loved and appreciated as they celebrate the holidays in a shelter. ■ At YWCA Evansville, we never underestimate the power of young women on a mission! When Signature School students, Jennifer and Claire decided to collect hygiene items for homeless women, they enlisted support from their friends, family members, church congregations, and fellow Youth Resources program participants. The result was an incredible donation of hope bags for our residents from two young women who are changing the world with one small act of kindness at a time! ■



**Pictured above:** In celebration of Women's History Month, volunteers from Target East provided a fun evening to celebrate the strength and determination of our residents. Our residents and their children were treated to a delicious meal from Olive Garden complete with yummy desserts in our gym. The atmosphere was nurturing and light as residents enjoyed a meal with others currently calling the YWCA home. Thank you to the wonderful team from Target East who made this such a special day for the YWCA! ■ **Pictured below:** After receiving a grant to provide warm and cozy blankets for our community, students and staff from the University of Southern Indiana got to work creating beautiful handmade throws. On a cold day in January, USI Multicultural Center's Executive Director, Dr. Pamela Hopson, and Outreach Coordinator & Student Mentor, Jada Hogg, delivered warmth to our building to share with many of the women and youth we serve. Thank you USI Multicultural Center for this incredibly thoughtful and much needed gift! ■



Interested in being part of our donor family? We'd love to have you!  
Donation drives, activities for our clients, gifts for any holiday - we're open to all ideas. Or we could offer you a few of our own! Just give us a call at 812-422-1191.

# EVENTS 2024

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**APRIL  
1-28**

**UNTIL JUSTICE JUST IS  
RACIAL JUSTICE  
CHALLENGE**

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**MAY  
08**

**TRIBUTE TO  
ACHIEVEMENT DINNER  
5:30 PM**

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**AUG  
28**

**WOMEN'S EQUALITY  
DAY LUNCHEON  
11:30 AM**

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**SEPT  
18-25**

**LEGACY ONLINE  
AUCTION**

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**NOV  
13**

**TASTES & TREASURES  
HOLIDAY LUNCHEON  
10:00 AM**

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**YWCA IS ON  
A MISSION**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT  
[WWW.YWCAEVANSVILLE.ORG](http://WWW.YWCAEVANSVILLE.ORG)**

# OUR NEW WEBSITE IS NOW LIVE!

After months of planning and lots of hard work, we are happy to share that our new and improved website is ready to view. Please visit [ywcaevansville.org](http://ywcaevansville.org) or scan the QR code below to visit our new site.



## YWCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

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For more information about the YWCA, or to make an online donation, please visit [www.ywcaevansville.org](http://ywcaevansville.org).

Join the YWCA in the fight to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice and freedom for all!

SAVE THE DATE &  
JOIN US IN HONORING

*Dr. Maria Del Rio Hoover*

AT THE YWCA  
33RD ANNUAL TRIBUTE TO ACHIEVEMENT

SCAN  
ME! >>



WEDNESDAY, MAY 8 | EVANSVILLE COUNTRY CLUB | DOORS OPEN @ 5:30PM