2010

Tribute!

Awards

Celebration

eliminating racism **ywca** 

Presented by the YWCA West Central Michigan with Title Sponsor



agenda

November 16, 2010 Noon to 1:30 p.m. DeVos Place

## Welcome

Ruth Butler Honorary Chair 2010 YWCA TRIBUTE! Awards Steering Committee

Ingrid Jensen President Board of Directors YWCA West Central Michigan

Susan Vogel-Vanderson Regional Director - West Michigan Mirador Family Wealth Advisors A Division of Fifth Third Bank

# Invocation

Reverend Doug Van Doren Pastor Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

# Luncheon

## **Awards Presentation**

Mary Gill-Thornton Chair 2010 YWCA TRIBUTE! Awards Steering Committee

**Ruth Butler** 

Thank you for attending!

advocacy



#### **Candace Cowling**

Executive Director Child and Family Resource Council Nominated by Laurie Gardner

With quiet focus for over a decade, Candace Cowling has been an integral part of improving the way our community responds to child abuse and neglect.

The scope of the problem is shocking. This year alone in Kent County, over 2,500 children were identified as victims of abuse or neglect. The impact of the problem is equally shocking. Child victims may endure physical trauma or worse. They can suffer from cognitive delays or emotional difficulties. As children grow, their experiences may manifest in high-risk behaviors.

Knowing the extraordinary devastation that this inflicts on the lives of children and our community, Candace has worked to expand our definition of prevention beyond abuse and neglect, to also include the notion that children are best served when families are healthy. That notion has particular importance for women who are often families' primary caregivers. Through Candace's leadership, in just the last 5 years, over \$11 million in public dollars and United Way grants were invested in Kent County to prevent child abuse and neglect, and serve families. Such investment has economic benefits. For every \$1 spent on child abuse prevention, \$34 will not be spent on publicly-funded crisis-oriented programming such as protective services, foster care, special education, and counseling.

Annually, more than 8,000 children and their families are helped through the Council's services that include trainings for mandated reporters, parents, and child care providers, as well as, violenceprevention programs for middle- and high-school girls. The Council reaches out to all first-time parents in Kent County and connects them to critical supports. It also offers parenting and life skills classes, and helps parents track their child's development from 4 months to 5 years. Such efforts are proven to work. The Council's "Healthy Start" program provides a \$2.93 return for every \$1 invested.

Candace's influence is far-reaching. She has presented at the National Prevent Child Abuse Conference and was recently reappointed to the Michigan's Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board. She has worked with the Children's Trust Fund and the local collaborative—First Steps—in its effort to help children reach their full potential. She is an integral part of the Kent County Prevention Initiative, Kent County Child Death Review Board, and the Kent County Family and Children Coordinating Council.

Using the words given to her by a mentor years ago, Candace describes how she approaches her work, "Effecting change requires gentle pressure, relentlessly applied". In doing just that, Candace has helped make children safer.

# arts



#### Laurie Cirivello

Executive Director Grand Rapids Community Media Center Nominated by Erin Wilson

Laurie Cirivello comes into a room with energy that is matched only by the ever-changing industry in which she works. Her resolve and optimism are contagious. With 20 years experience in non-commercial media, she still passionately describes the way that providing supportive access to technology and media gives voice to those who have none; the way it creates a medium for expression, creativity and sharing.

As Executive Director of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center (CMC), she oversees a nationally regarded organization boasting stateof-the art technology and venues intentionally designed to build bridges in our community. CMC includes WYCE-Radio, Wealthy Theatre, *The Rapidian*, and GRTV Television. It also provides media literacy, technology education, and hundreds of area non-profits with IT support, web-development, and communications strategy support.

Laurie joined CMC at a critical point. The founding director had passed away suddenly, just as an ambitious capital campaign had been announced. The acquisition of the historic Wealthy Theatre and its accompanying \$250,000 debt was a concern for many. The following year, the organization endured painful budget cuts.

In just 5 years at CMC's helm, Laurie's influence has had far-reaching impact. Committed to her staff and organization's

mission, she reorganized CMC to better connect its people and departments and thus, improve CMC's effectiveness. She led the successful completion of the \$2.4 million capital campaign that allowed the organization to retire the Wealthy Theatre debt and implement significant technological improvements throughout its service areas. Among these was increased signal strength for WYCE radio, which now reaches listeners along the West Michigan lakeshore.

Laurie was instrumental in creating and launching *The Rapidian*, then one of only a few dozen such publications in the country. Through *The Rapidian*, citizen reporters are given the tools needed to gather and publish (via video, audio and text) local news to the web. In short, as Laurie describes, "stories about us and by us" often not covered by traditional outlets. The experiment caught on. Now, forprofit news outlets nationwide are investing resources to do the same.

With her direction, Wealthy Theatre, once a vaudeville theater and later neighborhood movie house, has come to be known as a safe place for expression by groups as varied as the Nation of Islam, GVSU's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender) Resource Center, local Baptist churches, Grand Rapids Hip-Hop Coalition, MomsBloom, and West Michigan American Civil Liberties Union.

Throughout her work, Laurie has committed herself to building community by creating opportunities for us to know and learn from one another.

business, management, industry and labor



Jo-Anne Perkins General Manager, Cart Solutions Group Cascade Engineering Nominated by Kenyatta Brame

Jo-Anne Perkins arrived at Cascade Engineering ten years ago after operating her own successful business in Canada. Today, she heads Cascade's Cart Solutions-group. In the gritty, male-dominated industry of solid waste hauling and recycling, she is leading the way with innovations that make the industry more efficient, environmentally friendly and beneficial for cities, haulers and - for the first time in the industry - the end consumer.

Jo-Anne applied technology in new ways throughout the collection and drop-off process and expanded Cascade's capacity to support everything for the "back of the collection truck". With these processes and products, communities can now accurately track recycling participation and landfill diversion. With an eye on the consumer, she began offering never-before-seen customized carts in a variety of colors and with a range of imprints, including all the big sports team logos.

With revenues estimated at \$50+ million, she has grown her group into one of Cascade's two largest flagship units. With customers happier than ever, she increased product output and top line revenues by over 50% in five years. Based on her success, Cascade folded two new businesses into Jo-Anne's management portfolio.

Recalling her parents' encouragement as she began her career, Jo-Anne is committed to insuring the women throughout Cascade Engineering have similar support. With her colleagues, she established the "Women's Networking Group"- a personal mentoring and training effort for other women in the company.

As part of Cascade's senior management, Jo-Anne is involved in the company's well-regarded work toward improving race relations and creating a "safe" environment for addressing issues of race and culture.

In 2009 Jo-Anne combined her business savvy with a personal mission and launched "The Pink Cart"-initiative after suffering the loss of several family members to breast cancer. Partnering with the American Cancer Society, Cascade now produces brightly colored pink carts, prominently imprinted with ACS' well-known pink ribbon. On each lid, consumers also find breast cancer awareness information. Cascade donates \$5 from the purchase of each Pink Cart to support ACS' awareness and research work. Over 15,000 carts have been sold into 30 states nationwide since the launch, with Cascade's production crew pressed to keep pace with demand. The accompanying website (www.thepinkcart.com) is an important resource for spreading the word and providing a community for those dealing with breast cancer. Its Facebook page boasts more than 26,000 friends.

In the span of just one decade, Jo-Anne has proven that it is possible to simultaneously grow business, protect our environment, and improve lives.

community service



#### Linda Patterson

Mary Free Bed Guild/ Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital Nominated by Julie Ridenour

In work and life, Linda Patterson has committed herself to ensuring that those without a voice are given the chance to speak; that the most vulnerable among us are protected; and that individuals are empowered to improve the world around them.

As the Dyer-Ives Foundation Executive Director, Linda has helped rebuild and strengthen neighborhoods. As a volunteer, she served as President of the Junior League of Grand Rapids and helped cosponsor the Governor's Conference on Community Prevention of Child Abuse. She was a Founding Director of the East Grand Rapids Schools Educational Foundation. The Channel 35 Art Auction, Women's City Club, University of Michigan President's Club and Alumni Association, March of Dimes, and Heart of West Michigan United Way have all benefited from Linda's service.

Yet, Linda's greatest passion resides with the Mary Free Bed Guild and Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital organizations she has been a part of since 1966. During Linda's years of volunteer work and leadership, the Hospital grew to become an award-winning comprehensive rehabilitation center for adults and children. Today, the Hospital offers an array of inpatient and outpatient programs, clinics and specialty medical treatment services. The Hospital and Guild (which founded the Hospital over a century ago and serves today as its owner) have a rich history of female leadership. Linda built on that tradition, serving as the Guild's President, Vice-President, and Secretary. She was the second woman to be appointed Chair of the Hospital's Board of Trustees, and continues as a trustee. Linda has also chaired the Hospital Board's Finance Committee and served on the Board's Executive Committee.

The Mary Free Bed Fund, brought to inception by Linda in 1988, was established to provide financial support to resources serving people with disabilities. To date, the Fund has invested more than \$16.4 million to advance both the Hospital's mission of restoring independence, hope and freedom to people with disabilities, as well as, providing support to community organizations with similar missions. Just a few of these include Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Camp, Grand Rapids Sled Wings, Bikes for the Rest of Us. Equest Center for Therapeutic Riding, Living Light Dance Company, and Very Special Arts-Michigan of Grand Rapids.

Through Linda's thoughtful leadership and advocacy, individuals with disabilities who seek an independent life, who seek to expand their boundaries and take on new adventures, have a far greater likelihood of accomplishing those goals. And by insuring their inclusion in our larger community, she has strengthened us all.

professions



#### Stacy Mcginnis

Assistant Superintendent Kent County Juvenile Detention Center Nominated by Betty Burton-Groce

Brightly colored Crayola<sup>®</sup> drawings from her children decorate Stacy McGinnis' office door. Dozens of snapshots and notes given to her by friends and family cover her walls. Speaking with her for only a few minutes, it is clear that her sense of family, friendship, and deep love of children is what drives her.

With an undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in Social Work, Stacy began her career as a Resident Advisor with the Grand Rapids Job Corps Center. She later joined Kent County's staff as a Juvenile Probation Officer. Stacy recounts the amount of time, effort and heart she put into helping "her" kids get back on track. Sometimes things ended successfully, and those kids went on to graduate high school, are now grown, and doing well. Sometimes things ended differently, and Stacy admits how it broke her heart every time. After years standing side by side our community's often forgotten children, she grudgingly accepts such disappointments.

It was Stacy's success in connecting with troubled children that led to her promotion as Community Probation Supervisor and later Kent County's first female Assistant Superintendent of Juvenile Detention.

As Assistant Superintendent, Stacy oversees a facility that admitted over 1,600 young people last year whose offenses were so serious that a court determined releasing them would endanger public safety or their own welfare. On a given day, the facility has 69 residents ranging in age from nine to seventeen years. She knows each one's name and is as quick to give them hugs, as she is to impose consequences when they begin to stray. Stacy is keenly aware that for many of the children in her care. Juvenile Detention is their last chance. The children know it too, and heartened by Stacy's confidence in them, many work hard to improve. During Stacy's tenure as Assistant Superintendent, the number of residents placed in confinement decreased by 40%. Stacy and her staff work intensively with the residents to help them continue their education, develop life skills, and change their values and belief systems, so that they can re-enter our community with the greatest likelihood of succeeding.

Throughout her career, Stacy has worked tirelessly to ensure that our community's most vulnerable children are given the support they need because she knows that when children believe in themselves and are given the right tools and encouragement, they will not only grow, they will thrive.

sports, fitness and wellness



#### Karen Kaashoek

Executive Director Catherine's Health Center Nominated by Deb Bailey and Helen Lehman

Then, a nurse at one of Grand Rapids' area hospitals, Karen Kaashoek's introduction to Catherine's Health Center was as a volunteer in the late 1990s. The Center - tucked into a corner of the century-old basement of St. Alphonsus Catholic Church - offered basic health care to low-income patients. Touched by the work and the need she saw, she later joined the paid nursing staff, providing immunizations, health education, cholesterol screenings, blood pressure checks, and screenings for children.

When the collaboration that initially supported Catherine's ended, the Center's future came into question. Undaunted and committed to the families who depended on Catherine's. Karen stepped into the role of Executive Director. As the only free clinic on Grand Rapids' northeast side, her first priority was to keep the Center's doors open. She soon established the Center's own 501(c)(3) status, laying the foundation for Catherine's self-sufficiency. In light of economic challenges, Karen went so far as to forego a salary for six months to prevent cuts to staff or services. To ensure that she could provide the leadership Catherine's needed. Karen added to her nursing education and earned bachelor's and master's degrees.

During her 13-year tenure, Karen has expanded the Center's services and staffing in order to care for the 5,000 patients who seek its care annually and to help develop the capacity of other area free clinics to serve those most in need. To increase Catherine's medical staff. she partnered with the student nursing programs at Grand Rapids Community College and Calvin College. Karen was instrumental in bringing the area's free clinics together in order to maximize scarce resources. She also serves as the Vice-President of the Free Clinics of Michigan organization. Under Karen's leadership, Catherine's received Kent County's first annual Douglas Mack award for excellence in community collaboration and twice earned a Governor's Award for Excellence in Primary Care.

Currently, Karen is leading Catherine's much-needed \$1.275 million capital campaign to expand its facilities. The Center's eight staff members work in a 1,200 square foot space that includes a waiting room, toilet, nurse's station, two exam rooms, consultation office, and an area that doubles as a business office and reception desk. The lack of capacity forces Catherine's to turn away twenty patients daily. At the campaign's end, Catherine's will be able to care for 14,000 low-income patients annually.

In the words of her nominators, "Karen defines the profession of nursing, models a selfless commitment to community services, and demonstrates, always graciously, the difference one person can make."

judy lloyd student leadership award scholarship presented by the ywca bo**a**rd of directors



Judy Lloyd

September 18, 1945 to June 1, 2005 "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." -John Quincy Adams

It was this way with Judy Lloyd as well. Her kindness and extraordinary grasp of the issues facing our community, inspired countless numbers to follow Judy's lead. She was a role model for us all; the most graceful and respected of leaders. Judy led in a quiet, unassuming way-connecting individuals and organizations to the benefit of those most in need. She was a cheerleader and a touchstone, knowing who to bring to the table to get a job done and then devoting herself wholeheartedly to the tasks needed to get there. She touched hearts and strengthened our community at the same time. Judy's passing was met with an outpouring of generosity in her memory. These gifts which the YWCA has housed at the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, are directed to long-term support of our services to create a community supportive of women and their families.

Within the YWCA, Judy's two-decades of influence was immeasurable. She participated on the TRIBUTE! Steering and Selection Committees. She helped establish and grow the YWCA's Circle of Women (now, Open Circle) Celebration exponentially. Judy was a member of our Finance Committee, helping manage finite resources to effectively address the seemingly infinite challenges facing women and girls. She led the YWCA's Board of Directors during some of the organization's most historic moments and helped to lay the foundation for fundamental change in the national YWCA. And through each moment, with each task, Judy offered those with whom she worked warm words of encouragement and the practical hands-on help to succeed.

With a corps of volunteers who resemble Judy's dedication and quiet leadership, the YWCA has worked hard over the last century to create an environment that allows women and girls to thrive and lead. The TRIBUTE! Student Award is an extension of that. We honor those young women who, while still in high school, have already shown themselves to be gifted, competent models for us all. The connection between these young women and Judy is natural and apparent. It is most appropriate that the Student Leadership Award Scholarship should bear her name.

Inspired by Judy's life and work, the YWCA Board of Directors chose to establish the Student Leadership Award Scholarship in her honor. It is designed to offer practical help to TRIBUTE! student honorees as they work to fulfill their dreams. It is in this way that we recognize Judy and commit ourselves to a future motivated by her values and example.

student honoree

# and recipient of the ywca's judy lloyd student leadership award scholarship



#### Yolanda Cornejo Senior

East Kentwood High School Nominated by Dr. Shirley Johnson

The youngest of five, Yolanda Cornejo comes from a tight-knit family. She laughswhenshe describes the differences between the quiet meals that she and her mother have each evening now that her siblings are grown and gone, and the holidays when they try to squeeze her four brothers, their spouses and children into the living room. She is quick to credit her family, when asked about her accomplishments. She says, "My family has always encouraged me. They give me strength and the confidence to try."

That sense of confidence has helped Yolanda distinguish herself as a leader at East Kentwood High School (EKHS). As class vice-president, she provides direction to other officers on a variety of campus activities such as charitable community projects, student council programming, homecoming, and the junior/senior prom.

Yolanda's leadership also shines through in one of her primary interest areas - entrepreneurship and business. As President of East Kentwood's Young Entrepreneurs Association, Yolanda is responsible for leading and organizing business events for high school students, as well as, training students how to start a business, develop small business plans, address challenges, and create marketing strategies. Yolanda is a member of the international organization Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) that works to prepare emerging leaders in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. At DECA competitions, she and her teammates are required to solve a variety of business problems through strategic analysis, and present their findings to a panel of judges, which ranks them against their competitors.

Sensitive to issues of diversity and the challenges students who are new to our country face, Yolanda helps students in the English Language Learner classes with the ultimate goal of seeing them successfully transition into the country and culture. She was recently chosen to participate as EKHS' student representative in a focus group designed to gather feedback on diversity-related issues in the district and the challenges of a growing and diverse student population. At its conclusion, Yolanda was selected to present to the Board of Education regarding the experience.

Based on her demonstrated leadership and academic achievements, Yolanda earned an internship with the superintendent of Kentwood Public Schools. Through her work to collect alumni information, prepare releases, and organize the district's presence on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, she has been instrumental in developing the district's social media communication strategy.

Yolanda has accomplished a great deal in her young life. We expect the years to come will be filled with accomplishment as well.