

Tribute!

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

2013 Awards Celebration

With Title Sponsor



#ywtribute

agenda

November 6, 2013

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

DeVos Place

Welcome

Ingrid Jensen

President, YWCA Board of Directors

Carla Blinkhorn

CEO, YWCA West Central Michigan

Tom Welch

President, Fifth Third Bank Western Michigan

Dale Ann Iverson

Chair, YWCA Tribute! Awards Planning Committee

Luncheon

Awards Presentation

Ingrid Jensen

Dale Ann Iverson

Thank you for attending!



Sharon Loughridge

Executive Director

D.A. Blodgett - St. John's

Nominated by Maria Filice

In Kent County more than 9,000 cases of child abuse or neglect are reported each year. The CDC estimates that the average cost over a lifetime for a child that has experienced maltreatment is over \$210,000. The financial cost is startling, but it is the human cost that exacts the greatest price.

Sharon Loughridge began her career successfully working with children on the front lines of Michigan's foster care system. She was recognized as Kent County's Social Worker of the year. As manager of the Minor Mothers Program, she and her team were honored by the National Association of Counties.

As Executive Director of D.A. Blodgett-St. John's – Michigan's largest private child welfare agency – Sharon oversees an organization covering more than 40 counties and an annual budget in excess of \$16 million. With the knowledge that a child succeeds when her family succeeds, last year alone DABSJ served more than 10,000 children and family members through a comprehensive array of programming that includes prevention services, counseling and school support, on-campus home-like residential care, foster care, and emergency shelter. DABSJ also provides adoption services and Big Brother Big Sister programming. Its effectiveness is noteworthy: 92 percent of children who receive foster care services through

DABSJ go to high school and 72 percent of these children continue on to college, compared to the national average of just 13 percent.

Sharon's influence extends well beyond DABSJ. She has served on the Board of Directors for the Michigan Federation for Children and Families and the Board of Directors for the Kent County Child and Families Coordinating Council. Because Sharon's commitment to children does not end when the workday ends, she served on the Comstock Park Public School Board, becoming its first female Chair.

Sharon is respected by her peers, colleagues, and staff alike, perhaps no more so than when she announced not one but two separate cancer diagnoses. Throughout her treatment, she generously shared details of her journey and prognosis. In doing so, she became a safe resource for staff asking for advice and input for similar situations. Despite her own challenges, Sharon deftly guided the organization through the Great Recession, a merger, and 125th anniversary. And through it all, as she has done for more than 30 years, she ensured that the children and families in our community who reached out for help, received the care they needed.



Jenn Schaub

*Assistant Director of
Neighborhood Revitalization
Dwelling Place*

*Nominated by Ashley E. Nickels and
Dennis Sturtevant*

Art is the transformation of a vision into something tangible. Something that can be seen or heard or felt. Something that challenges us to grow in new ways. So it is too with building a community. And in both areas, Jenn Schaub excels.

A recent exhibit at the Division Avenue Arts Cooperative showcased more than 20 of Jenn's hand carved and printed woodcuts from a much broader body of work representing an impressive range of mediums.

As Assistant Director of Neighborhood Revitalization since 2005 for the local community development corporation, Dwelling Place, Jenn's name has become synonymous with success in marrying economic development and art. In her role, she assists in the coordination and implementation of strategies pertaining to Dwelling Place's neighborhood and commercial corridor revitalization projects, maintaining the occupancy of the organization's commercial properties, and attracting and retaining residents. In addition, Jenn is active with the Heartside Business Association, the Division Avenue Arts Cooperative, Artworks, and First Fridays.

Most visible has been her work with the Avenue for the Arts, a four-block commercial and residential corridor along South Division Avenue. During her tenure, the area has received

numerous awards, including recognition from Michigan's governor. South Division, once a tragic example of urban decay, has been transformed. Today, the Avenue is viewed as a critical component of Grand Rapids' growing artistic landscape, as well as, home to more than 50 "live/work" spaces for artists, arts related businesses, and a host of other arts organizations. Like a magnet, that pioneering work is drawing numerous for-profit developers and their investments into the neighborhood.

Noteworthy is that the Avenue's growth has not experienced the gentrification that one might anticipate when financial investment enters struggling areas. Rather with Jenn's leadership, it highlights the success that comes as a result of including all stakeholders, especially those traditionally marginalized. With an eye to the future, Jenn's work has helped create a housing, business, and cultural infrastructure that has infused the neighborhood with a level of stability and longevity that will help it weather circumstances that affect less rooted arts-business activities.

With a charisma and energy that are described as nothing less than addictive, Jenn has helped bring to life to a vision that unites a community. In doing so, she has improved life for a once forgotten neighborhood and for us all.

business, management, industry and labor



Leslee M. Lewis

*Practice Department Manager
Dickinson Wright PLLC*

*Nominated by Amy Gras and Paula
Lindsley*

Although women make up almost half of law school graduates, they remain sorely underrepresented in executive roles within private practice. An American Bar Association report released earlier this year found that women accounted for 19.9 percent of partners and just 15 percent of equity partners. At the 200 largest firms, only four percent of managing partners are women. Leslee M. Lewis can be credited with effectively working to turn that tide.

In her 18 years in practice, Leslee has earned a reputation as a highly skilled attorney with particular expertise in sustainable energy, green building, non-profit, and finance.

She is listed in *Chambers USA*, *Michigan Super Lawyers*, and *Best Lawyers in America*. Additionally, Leslee was elected to the preeminent American Law Institute, one of just 3,000 judges, law professors, and attorneys in the country.

As a mentor, Leslee is active with the Dickinson Wright Women's Network where she provides guidance to women associates and others. She was the first to

persuade the firm to institute flex-time. The Real Estate practice group she manages has a predominance of women in leadership roles and was ranked second in the "2013 Best of the

Best" by *Midwest Real Estate News*. As the first female managing partner within Dickinson Wright's Grand Rapids office and as a member of the firm's Governing Board, she has promoted policies that provide leadership opportunities and prioritize the recruitment of women and minorities.

While Leslee's professional accomplishments are numerous and impressive, her life outside of work is equally inspiring. She has donated countless pro bono hours to area non-profits and volunteered in a range of capacities. The catalog is extensive and includes organizations which aid migrant families, homeless teens and women, children, medical clinics for the poor, and veterans, among others. Yet, Lake Michigan Academy, a non-profit school for children with learning differences, has been the greatest beneficiary of Leslee's commitment and generosity. She served on the Board of Directors for ten years, three years as Board President. She is now Chairperson Emeritus.

The prevailing theme throughout Leslee's work and life has been to create an environment that respects the dignity of others. Whether counseling a new associate, gently but tenaciously effecting culture change, or helping an organization serve the most marginalized, Leslee is grounded in the knowledge that when the values of kindness and respect intersect with opportunities for action, we all benefit.

community service



Ora McConner Jones, PH.D.

*Retired Educator and Administrator,
Chicago Public Schools*

Community Volunteer

Nominated by Ingrid Scott Weekley

Ora McConner Jones' volunteer roles are informed by both a deep love of learning and a belief that everyone should have the same chance to benefit from and participate in a community. Growing up in Georgia during the 1940s and 50s, Ora knew the sting of segregation and saw the human and societal consequences when people lacked opportunity. Her answer has been to devote herself to causes that promote health, literacy, and the arts with particular emphasis on reaching out to people of color and girls.

Ora's professional training drew her first to the classroom where she taught English, before moving into administration within the Chicago Public Schools. Understandably, when she and her husband, Dr. Courtney Jones, moved to Grand Rapids, it took little time for Ora to discover Aquinas College's programs for lifelong learners. She saw wonderful educational opportunities available to seniors, but few seniors of color participating. She set about to remedy that by reaching out to the program staff. The result was the addition of African American history to the curriculum and the inclusion of African Americans on the Institute's board and faculty.

Described as a "creative consensus builder" in her role on the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation, Ora

has engaged key audiences as means of establishing endowment funding for GRPL initiatives, such as "Taste of Soul Sunday." Ora has been active with the YWCA previously as a member of the Board of Directors among other roles and is currently a member of the YWCA's Fund Development Committee. Beyond this, Clark Retirement Community, United Negro College Fund of West Michigan, Opera Affiliates, the Kent County Medical Society Alliance, and the Fountain Street Church Foundation have all benefited from Ora's commitment and dedication.

Particularly close to her heart is her work on the Rosa Parks Sculpture Project, the aim of which was to erect the statue and educate our community about Rosa Parks' contributions. Ora was an active fundraiser, led all media activities, and continues to participate on the Education Committee which is charged with engaging students in Rosa Parks' legacy through an annual essay contest which awards cash prizes to the top three essayists.

In the few short years since her arrival, Ora has translated richly varied interests into meaningful contributions to the well-being of our community, and quickly made Grand Rapids a better home for us all.

professions



Rochelle Manor, Ph.D.

Co-Owner, BRAINS

(Behavioral Resources and Institute
for Neuropsychological Services)

Clinical Director, BRAINS Foundation

Nominated by Michael Wolff

Rochelle Manor's career has been fueled by the question "What if"? What if children and families had doors opened, instead of closed? What if we no longer labeled children as "bad" and instead provided them with the resources they need to reach their actual potential? What if, rather than marginalizing others, we sought to understand and include them within our communities?

To answer those questions, Rochelle is equal parts neuropsychologist, educator, entrepreneur, child advocate, mentor, and unabashed optimist. In the seemingly mysterious and elusive space where brain function and behavior connect, Rochelle pulls back the curtain, revealing understanding and more importantly, providing treatments that help her patients navigate daily life. She has helped hundreds of children, adults, and families, often scarred by years struggling to cope with situations that have left them confused, heartbroken, frustrated, and isolated.

As the first female Chair of the Psychology Department and later Clinic Manager of the Psychological Consultation Center at Pine Rest Christian Mental Health, Rochelle demonstrated great commitment to the mentorship of other psychologists, particularly women. She has also applied this specialized field in ways that have contributed to research and education on ways to best support young women

with publications such as "Building Self-Esteem in Young Women: A Spiritual, Biopsychosocial Model".

Rochelle has provided countless trainings for community organizations, most recently Muskegon County's youth court and mental health systems where she has worked to develop new approaches in dealing with child offenders. Rochelle also leads the pre-doctoral training program for a consortium which includes the Department of Psychology at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, Ottawa Community Mental Health, and BRAINS (Behavioral Resources and Institute for Neuropsychological Services) which she co-founded in 2007.

Unique in our community, BRAINS reflects Rochelle's professional and egalitarian ethic. It is a traditional fully-accredited, for-profit practice. Services are extensive, holistic and multi-disciplinary, linking neurological, psychological and educational diagnoses to interventions that include counseling, neurofeedback, occupational and physical therapies, and more.

Setting the practice apart is the BRAINS Foundation which provides the same high quality, professional care to children and families who could not otherwise afford it. It is also a top-ranked pre-doctoral training program, attracting applicants nationwide.

In just six years, BRAINS has significantly expanded, with offices in Grand Haven and Grand Rapids. However, for Rochelle, her success is not measured in the number of offices, accolades or awards, but rather in the lives of those for whom she has cared.

sports, fitness and wellness



Kristen Aidif

Race Director

Fifth Third River Bank Run

Nominated by Lori "Maranda" Cook

"For the past 20 years Kristen has been the conductor who keeps everyone on the same note as they work to create a masterpiece that is the Fifth Third River Bank Run."

- Lori "Maranda" Cook, nominator

From its earliest days when it could be said tumbleweeds were as common as parking meters in downtown Grand Rapids, Kristen Aidif has grown the Fifth Third River Bank Run into the largest 25K race in the country and one of the top 100 races in the nation. Under her leadership, the River Bank Run is today a year-round fitness initiative, involving almost 100,000 children and adults.

Healthy activities should be available for everyone, and Kristen has devoted much time and energy to build on the River Bank Run's success in order to make that a reality. She helped expand the 25K race into a 5K Run, 5K Walk, 5K Community Walk (which allows families and pets to join), 10K Run, and the Fifth Third Jr. She established the "Feelin' Good Mileage Club", an in-school, six-week fitness program that gets over 50,000 kids running, walking and jogging every day. She has spearheaded Women-Only running groups, training programs, clubs and support groups. Today, more than 50 percent of River Bank participants are women. Partnering with the Mary Free

Bed Guild/ Rehabilitation Hospital, the River Bank is the only 25K in the nation to offer both wheelchair and handcycle divisions. To make the Run attractive to beginners and more advanced runners alike, Kristen launched programs that cater to first time runners, as well as, weekly training runs for experienced athletes who want to improve.

Kristen's reach is found in all sectors of our community. For businesses, she provides "Fitness In A Box" to encourage employees to adopt healthier lifestyles. To get children to develop healthy habits early, she has rallied area support for fun, kid-friendly fitness programs. Following state funding cuts to physical education, Kristen and her team developed a fundraising program that substitutes traditional candy or cookie dough sales with walks or similar fitness events. She has even helped launch other running events, like the Grand Rapids Marathon.

In a city that boasts some of the finest health care institutions in the nation, from direct care to research to education, there are few individuals who have had such widespread and sustained influence on our community's understanding of and approach to health and fitness than Kristen.

judy lloyd student leadership award scholarship

presented by the ywca board 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 people to follow her lead. She was a role model for us all, the most graceful and respected of leaders. Judy led in a quiet, unassuming way as she connected 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, which the YWCA has housed at the Grand Rapids Community Foundation and directed to long-term support of our services—all to create a community supportive of women and their families that Judy loved so much.

Judy's two decades of influence at the YWCA is immeasurable. She participated on the Tribute! Steering and Selection Committees and helped establish and grow the YWCA's Circle of Women Celebration (now Open Circle) 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 lay the foundation for fundamental change in the national YWCA. In each moment, with each task, Judy offered those she worked with warm words of encouragement and the practical hands-on help to succeed beyond expectations.

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 should bear her name.

Inspired by Judy's life and work, the YWCA Board of Directors chose to establish the Student Leadership Award in her honor. It is designed to offer practical help to this and future 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.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Carla Blinkhorn'.

Carla Blinkhorn,
YWCA CEO

student honoree

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



India Dunning

Senior

Forest Hills Northern High School

Nominated by Loren Dunning

India Dunning carries a 3.89 GPA, and is not only a member of the National Honor Society, she also serves on the organization's Board of Directors. She has earned her varsity letter and pin for cheerleading and crew. In the last three months alone, India has volunteered more than 80 hours. She is smart, athletic, generous, and at just 17 years old, she is also a cancer survivor.

India was first diagnosed in 2007. After completing 2-1/2 years of treatment and then passing the all-important five-year milestone last year, she learned this spring that a new cancer had appeared. Yet, while such a diagnosis may be the thing that gives others the greatest pause, it is also the thing that India refuses to allow to slow her down. In her words, "I won't let this set me back." Rather, it seems to have provided even greater clarity and focus.

Much of India's volunteer work is connected to health and wellness. She volunteers with Michigan Blood and has obtained her Peer Leadership training certification from Planned Parenthood. She has also trained and served as an ambassador for the HIV AIDS Teen Summit, sponsored by

Grand Valley State University. Closest to her heart is her work with the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Hematology Oncology department where she volunteers at the annual picnic and holiday event, and makes blankets for the children undergoing treatment.

Following graduation, India intends to enter into the pharmacy field. With that decision, she has committed herself to a six-year degree program and is busy laying the groundwork. She spent last summer participating in Spectrum Health's job shadowing program and is currently taking courses through Kent Career Technical Center's Pharmacy Program in order to complete her certification in pharmacy prior to attending college. Last year, she was selected to attend the University of North Carolina LEAD Pharmacy Program, a preparatory professional development program for the field of pharmaceutical sciences.

A host of adjectives could be used to describe India. Intelligent and wise. Tenacious and determined. Kind. Empathetic. Generous. But, it is perhaps her optimism about what lies ahead that describes her best.