



# Tribute!

eliminating racism  
empowering women **ywca**

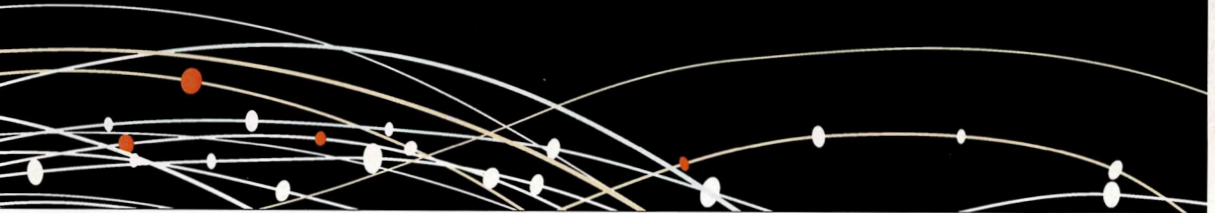
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2015 AWARDS CELEBRATION

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

#ywtribute

With Title Sponsor



# AGENDA

## **YWCA Tribute Awards**

**November 17, 2015**

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

DeVos Place

Grand Rapids, Michigan

## **Welcome**

Jacqueline Schafer

*President, YWCA Board of Directors*

*Co-chair, Tribute Awards Planning Committee*

Michelle VanTorre-Tellier

*Member, YWCA Board of Directors*

*Co-chair, Tribute Awards Planning Committee*

Tracey Hornbeck

*SVP and Regional CFO, Fifth Third Bank Western Michigan*

## **Luncheon**

## **Awards Presentation**

Jacqueline Schafer

Michelle VanTorre-Tellier

# ADVOCACY



## **Christina Arnold**

Director of Bob and Aleicia  
Woodrick Diversity Learning Center,  
Grand Rapids Community College  
*Nominated by Allison Arnold*

Chris Arnold's dream is a better future, not just for the Latina population she identifies with, but for all people — a future in which everyone feels welcome and included.

Through her work as Director of the Woodrick Diversity Learning Center at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), Chris facilitates dialogue to make that dream come true. She leads GRCC's well-known and well-attended Diversity Lecture Series, bringing in top-level experts from diverse backgrounds to inspire community conversation on global issues while promoting diversity and inclusion. Topics have included mental health, disabilities, race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, poverty, and global health. Chris was also part of the team that hosted President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter during GRCC's 100th anniversary celebration.

In over 36 years at GRCC, Chris has been involved in the Giants Awards and Banquet, Institute for Healing Racism, Latino Youth Conference, Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebrations, and Salute to Women. She also chairs GRCC's Diversity Team, providing educational opportunities throughout the college for faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Her love for this work shines through, stemming from the values instilled in

her by family. Her grandparents came to West Michigan as one of the first Mexican families to settle here, and her mother raised seven children as a single parent. Chris is proud of her family's history and heritage, and it propels her work. She uses her personal experiences to better understand others and help them overcome adversity through education and training.

The list of boards and committees Chris has served on is lengthy and significant: Blue Cross Blue Shield Advisory Council, City of Grand Rapids Human Resources Hiring Committee, Convention Arena Authority Community Inclusion Group, Diversity and Inclusion Council for Varnum Law, Heart of West Michigan United Way, American Council Education Network for Women Leaders in Education, Multiracial Association of Professionals Council, Women's Resource Center, and West Michigan Area College Presidents Implementation Group.

Her husband Robert and daughter Allison watch in admiration as Chris seeks a better future for our community. The work is never done, yet her passion will not cease.



*"To me, Chris is a selfless advocate in her commitment to bring voices and perspective to education, and make our community more inclusive."*

*Carroll Velie,  
Varnum Law*



### Amy Wilson

Artistic Director and Founder,  
Dance in the Annex  
*Nominated by Erin Wilson*

As a young girl, Amy Wilson was shy. Yet in the dance studio, she found a place to open up and feel comfortable. Dance was a haven for her throughout the years, and as an adult, she found she still craved a place to explore her art.

With that in mind, the collaborative arts collective Dance in the Annex (DITA) was formed. In founding DITA, Amy's goal was to give adult modern dancers a place to advance their education and experience — yet the collaborative has opened up much more. DITA encourages artists of many kinds to break down walls and work with each other in new ways, incorporating light, sound, and design into dance. Highlights include two annual events at Wealthy Theatre that Amy has created and produced, “Salmagundi” and “Trip the Light.”

Teaching is also an important component of Amy's artistic expression, bringing dance to a variety of levels. She is a professor at Grand Valley State University, teaches an intensive workshop at Michigan State University, and works with youth at places such as Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, Michigan Ballet Academy, and Zeeland High School.

The students she works with come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. To Amy, this is perfect — as modern dance invites all body types, shapes, and forms to the floor. She explores themes of feminism, justice, and equality in her pieces, once choreographing a piece for

“DisArt” at Kendall College of Art and Design featuring a female dancer who was paralyzed by Polio. Amy sought to raise awareness while showing that disabilities are not a barrier to the art form.

Amy and her husband (and frequent collaborator) Erin Wilson entered ArtPrize with Dance in the Annex in 2014. Their piece, “respirador (breather)”, won the Time-Based Juried Award. For ArtPrize 2015, Amy was selected for a Fellowship for Emerging Curators, working at the SiTe:LAB venue's Rumsey Street Project. The venue was selected for the Outstanding Venue Juried Award.

Her successes are not limited to this annual competition, however. They come each day that DITA exists and grows as an organization. She has learned from scratch how to solicit funding, handle accounting, coordinate with instructors, and other business administration. She may have been shy once, but today she thrives as an artist, a curator, and a leader.



*“She accepted none of the restrictions that float in the air and she took a seat at the table — the beginning of an ongoing era of incredible collaborations that have resulted in groundbreaking performance art.”*

*Erin Wilson,  
Husband and Wealthy Theatre Director*



# BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT, INDUSTRY, AND LABOR



## **Sandi Frost Steensma**

President and Principal Consultant,  
Kennari Consulting

*Nominated by Kim Kvorka*

In fundraising, it's all about relationships. A long-time community leader, Sandi Frost Steensma has many. But what she teaches to her nonprofit clients is how to develop their own — setting them up for more sustainable, long-term revenue. By developing those keys to success in her nonprofit clients, she equips them to go out and impact the community in myriad ways.

Sandi founded her company as Parrish Consulting in 2007 — as she often says, with “just me and a flip phone.” Today, with the company now known as Kennari Consulting, she oversees eight staff members while serving more than 50 nonprofit organizations as the largest full-service fundraising consulting firm in West Michigan, providing expertise to clients from annual funds to multi-million dollar capital campaigns.

Many local organizations would not have survived the economic crisis of 2008-2011 without her help. Instead, they had the fundraising ability to weather the storm and continue providing their crucial services.

Sandi's impact on the community also comes from her long-time career in public service. In 1992, she was appointed to the Cascade Township Planning Commission. She was elected to the Cascade Township Board of Trustees in 1998 and served there

through 2006, when she became a Kent County Commissioner representing Cascade, Lowell, Bowne, and a portion of Caledonia. While on the commission, she served three one-year terms as county board chairwoman (2010-2012). She resigned from the commission in 2014 to focus on her business, but remains in public service as she was appointed to the Lake Superior State University Board of Trustees by Governor Snyder.

She has been president of the Grand Rapids Jaycees, was a founding member of the Cascade Community Foundation, and served on a variety of nonprofit boards. She is also a member of the Small Business Association of Michigan Leadership Council.

Sandi brings her vast leadership experience right back into the office at Kennari, empowering her team. She believes in everyone working collectively for the common good. And good she has done, through her own achievements and the achievements of those she equipped.



*“Sandi has a unique talent for envisioning a desired outcome, and then simply not giving up until it has been achieved.”*

*Kim Kvorka,  
Kennari Consulting*

# COMMUNITY SERVICE



## **Andrea Haidle**

School Board Secretary,  
Kent Intermediate School District  
*Nominated by Carol Paine-  
McGovern*

When notified of her Tribute Award, Andrea Haidle wasn't sure the caller had the right number. To her, the surprise came in being recognized for exceptional volunteerism. Giving back was an ordinary act, something that had been instilled in her from a young age.

However, giving back as Andrea does is nothing short of extraordinary. In her 22 years of service on school boards, first in East Grand Rapids and then the Kent Intermediate School District, she has fought fiercely for the rights of students to have the best possible education and opportunities in life.

The Kent ISD team often looks to Andrea to carry their concerns to the state capitol and Congress — broaching issues such as equity in funding, early childhood education, and equal opportunities for all. The seemingly quiet, polite woman proudly gets on her soapbox, unafraid to take a stand when it is on behalf of children.

In her time at Kent ISD, Andrea has worked through the tough budget decisions while delivering innovative new opportunities for students. Her leadership helped establish new science, technology, engineering, and math opportunities: the Kent Innovation

High laboratory school to bring more project-based, engaging instructional methods; and the MySchool@Kent and SuccessLink online academies to meet the individual needs of students who may struggle or be stifled in a traditional setting.

Andrea is a member of the Kent County Medical Society Alliance and uses that platform to promote the health and wellness of all children. She is a staunch advocate for public schools, having graduated from Flint Central High School, and the University of Michigan twice (with her bachelor's and master's degrees). She has also tutored in the Grand Rapids Public Schools for more than a decade.

Andrea will be quick to deflect any accolades she receives, directing them to the team as a whole, but it's clear this one woman has changed the lives of many children.

❖ *“Her passion was contagious, her intellect admired, and her curiosity compelling. She pushed us to become stronger voices for public education.”*

*Carol Paine-McGovern,  
fellow East Grand Rapids  
School Board member*



# PROFESSIONS



## **Teresa Weatherall Neal**

Superintendent,  
Grand Rapids Public Schools  
*Nominated by Jane Gietzen*

When Teresa Weatherall Neal attended Creston High School as a teenager, she never imagined she would one day become Superintendent of Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Yet her life in GRPS, starting as a five-year-old student, followed a steady trajectory that seemed to prepare her for that very position. As she built her career there, she was content working behind the scenes at a senior level. In 2012, when the Board of Education appointed her Interim Superintendent, Teresa embraced the opportunity with courage. Her message was clear: "I will make a difference here."

Teresa embarked on a listening tour to gain valuable community feedback, then developed and implemented a transformation plan based on all she heard. There were challenges and decisions that weren't easy, like closing her alma mater along with other GRPS schools. But with transparency, vision, and determination, she pushed forward.

She was quickly rewarded with a full contract as Superintendent just six months after stepping in. Meanwhile, the victories for GRPS starting shining through in things like increasing graduation rates, test scores, attendance, and parent engagement. New public-private partnerships reinvigorated

the district. This fall, voters passed a \$175 million bond proposal for security, technology, classroom and building upgrades — a major confirmation from the community of Teresa's work.

As she leads the fifth largest school district in Michigan, Teresa lives each day keenly aware of the needs and challenges her students face. In her previous role overseeing the Title I budget (federal monies allocated to serving students in poverty), she created a program for homeless students and families that is now being replicated in districts throughout West Michigan. She believes strongly in treating all students and parents with dignity and respect, and removing the barriers to quality teaching and learning.

She is a wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, sister, cousin, aunt, niece, and daughter. Today, she is also Superintendent — an unexpected title, maybe, but one she holds with poise and with passion.



*"She is loved by her GRPS team. Not because she is easy on them, but because she expects great things from all of them — and she is getting great things!"*

*Jane Gietzen,  
Former GRPS School Board member*

# SPORTS, FITNESS, AND WELLNESS



## **Doreen Bolhuis**

President and Founder,  
Gymco, Inc.

*Nominated by John V. Byl*

Doreen Bolhuis always knew she was an athlete — she excelled in sports from the beginning. What she didn't know, at least not right away, was that she was also an entrepreneur at heart.

That discovery came through founding her own business, Gymco, Inc., in 1980. With that, she went from physical education teacher to pioneer. There were few female business owners or CEOs to help guide her, and she had difficulty getting the financial support she needed. But Doreen did not take no for an answer, and channeled all her energy, creativity, and commitment into the business.

Today, Gymco boasts a 16,000 square foot, state of the art facility. The core curriculum was originally focused primarily on gymnastics, but expanded to include programming for a variety of physical activities that provide experience in problem solving, goal setting, patience, and self-confidence. Doreen's aim? Promoting lifelong physical activity. Through Gymco, Doreen has influenced the lives of over 80,000 students — many who are young girls — in fitness, health, and wellness.

Included in that number are children from varied backgrounds. A grant from the State of Michigan provides funds for low-income students to participate in Gymco's preschool program, and Doreen has also facilitated partnerships with Great Start to Quality from the Kent

Intermediate School District, as well as the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

Her entrepreneurial spirit flourished beyond Gymco, as Doreen co-founded both Motion Evolution, LLC and Fitsmart Productions, LLC. Each provides programming and materials for promoting fitness programs and physical literacy in children.

Doreen has not forgotten the challenges of starting out as a female business owner, and has made it her mission to raise up those who follow her. She is passionate about empowering women through mentorship, was the second female mentor appointed to the Jandernoa Entrepreneurial Mentoring Program, and serves on the West Michigan Council of Inforum. She also developed "The Secrets of Dynamic Leadership for Women," a one-year leadership curriculum offered with Inforum to empower women to rise from management to executive-level positions. She also led Inforum's "We Connect" program to provide mentorship and leadership training for women of color.

She continues to flex her entrepreneurial muscle, but Doreen has not forgotten that she was an athlete first. She recently learned flying trapeze and trick water skiing — and she shows no signs of slowing down.



*"She has served as a powerful and inspirational role model to countless women. Her message to women is that you are capable of doing that which you think you cannot do."*



# JUDY LLOYD STUDENT LEADERSHIP 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 Planning 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 scholarship 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

## RECIPIENT OF THE JUDY LLOYD STUDENT LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP



### **Hayley Lee**

Senior,  
Wyoming High School  
*Nominated by Alane Rozelle*

For Hayley Lee, beginning courses at the Kent Career Tech Center was a turning point. Up until then, she had what she calls a fairly average high school career. The turning point was a conscious decision to seize the opportunities before her — a decision to stand out.

The senior now splits her time across many commitments, bringing her enthusiasm, creativity, and dynamic energy to each one. She is enrolled at Wyoming High School, Kent Innovation High, and the Kent Career Tech Center's criminal justice program. She was elected to serve as the Michigan State President for the SkillsUSA program, directing a state officer team of six students, presiding over all state meetings, making presentations to congressional leaders in Lansing and Washington, D.C., and representing Michigan at the SkillsUSA National Conference. She also serves on the Principal's Leadership Team, tutors algebra, participates in the Grand Rapids Police Department Explorer Program, and is a member of the Wyoming High School National Honor Society. Hayley is a rare high school intern at the 63rd District Court and works a part-time job several evenings per week.

Hayley thrives in leadership roles, and unlike most, she enjoys public speaking. In 2013, she gave the opening day speech for the Kent County Intermediate School District in front of over 300 educators

and superintendents. She is constantly encouraging those around her however she can. While studying immigration flows in the U.S., she listened to a group of refugees talk about the obstacles they faced upon arrival, and how simple everyday activities could be daunting for the children entering their new American schools. Hayley and a friend then decided to create a short teaching video demonstrating how to navigate a typical school day, and donated the video to Bethany Christian Services.

Hayley's days start earlier than most, rising at 4:00 a.m. in order to catch the city bus across town and into her school district. Her family moved out of the area during her sophomore year, but Hayley was determined to continue at her school. This drive and energy will serve her well in her future plans to attend college and study supply chain management. She would also like to pursue law school and eventually practice business law — though she would like to travel and study abroad, too.

With those goals and her rich experience, Hayley will have no problem standing out, just as she intended.



*"Hayley's infectious sunny disposition, ambition, and willingness to try new things impacts others. She inspired with her can-do attitude and rarely says no to a challenge."*

*Alane Rozelle,  
SkillsUSA Advisor*