

Yc HELPING THE HURTING

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www.youthchallenge.org



(Mission for Women Edition)
FALL 2011

YCMW—30 Years And STILL Standing!



Rev. Marva Downes
Director—YCMW

A big **“THANK YOU”** to all our Youth Challenge Mission for Women (YCMW) partners from the Staff, Executive Director, Dr Paul Echtenkamp, Board of Directors, and Director, Rev. Marva Downes for all your support. Everyone of you deserve a Gold Medal which we are unable to present to you at this time. Instead, *please accept the “Rose” pictured in this newsletter as an expression of our love.*



On September 12, 1981, Youth Challenge Mission for Women opened its doors to rescue and redeem broken and hurting women from the onslaught of substance abuse and addictions. At that time, not even the late Bishop Raúl González could have anticipated all the miracles and successes that would take place in the lives of the women who came for help.

All we know is the late Bishop had a Vision that was supported by the YC Board of Directors and financed by local pastors and their churches, friends, and families of the YC ministry. **We give God glory and praise for all that He has done!** Let’s hear the testimony of a pastor and his wife who have been partners of YCMW from it’s beginning and who are still presently involved with the ministry.

The Imswiler’s Testimony: “We can remember back more than 40 years ago when there was no Youth Challenge ministry in the Hartford area. Through the years, we were always thankful to God for the great results in the men’s ministry but were overjoyed when the ministry expanded to include an outreach to women as well.

Now 30 years have passed since the Youth Challenge Women’s Program was started. The results have been nothing short of amazing. Scores of lives have been reclaimed for the Kingdom of God. Families have been brought together. Many hurting women have once again taken up their God-given role as leaders as well as being healed in their roles as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and friends. Who can measure the value of a soul and the bringing together of whole families?!

As leaders we know that churches are struggling financially today

and there are a lot of demands upon their time and money. We are called to meet the needs of the whole world! However, in our haste to help the world, let us not forget the needs in our own backyard. Youth Challenge Mission for Women is a time-tested ministry, worthy of our support. **Women are even coming from Connecticut State Prisons into the program. What a great opportunity they have!** Through our support, we can help rescue a woman, save a family, bless a neighborhood and help secure a better America.

Let’s join together to support this great work. They cannot do this without the continuing support of churches and individuals. We would urge you to consider supporting or re-supporting this valuable ministry. Let’s save the world, but let’s not forget those on our own doorstep! God Bless You!”



Pastor Earl and Linda Imswiler,
Living Waters Fellowship Church, Windsor Locks, CT

30 Years And Still Bearing Fruit

THE IMSWILERS YEARLY INVOLVEMENT WITH YCMW: A few times a year the Imswilers invite the women to come to their church in Windsor Locks and give their testimonies, sing a few inspirational songs and share about the program. At the end of the service they are given a financial donation and treated to lunch with the members of the church in the fellowship hall.

In addition, the Imswilers and their church have traditionally blessed the women with Christmas gifts for them and their children. We thank God for such faithful and dedicated partners who have taken on their calling and commitment seriously to support YCMW. **We are seeking for more leaders like the Imswilers to join us.**

Let's leap ahead in the YCMW Vision to bring about change in the lifestyle, direction, and destiny of hurting and broken women and their children like those you have read about in this newsletter for another 30 years. Together, **We Can Do It!!** Please send your donation in the self-addressed envelope enclosed and add an extra \$30 or whatever you can afford in recognition of our 30th Anniversary. Thank You!

May the Lord bless you, your household, your business and your ministry, abundantly!

Sincerely,

Marva

The Reverend Marva Downes, Director



Gracie and mom (Gloria)

Greetings and Blessings to you all! My name is Grace Kuilan and I am the proud daughter of Gloria Kuilan; a graduate of the YCMW—1989.

By the grace of God was I born and so I am literally named after the grace of God. My father was a hardcore drug addict who lost his battle with drugs when I was a young child.

It is by God's grace that my mother

had God ordained people in her life that guided her to Youth Challenge (YC), one of these people being my godfather, Michael Corbin, himself a graduate of the YC Men's Home.

My mother had her 50th birthday while in the program—she still is one of the oldest to graduate. God became really real in my life during my senior year of high school. My mother had a heart attack and in the blink of an eye—my plans for my own life were gone.

In 2003, my mother and I made the difficult but fruitful decision to move to Dallas, TX to be closer to family. Since then my mother has begun to work on her Reverend License and currently works on the administration team at our church. I pursued my credentials as a nurse and I currently work with heart attack victims like when I was first introduced to medicine with my mother's heart attack. I am also now focusing on a degree to become a Pharmacist. To God be the glory that from two drug addicted parents, God would bless me to administer life-saving medications to my patients.

The road that God has me on is narrow. Few travel it. But God orders our steps. I am proof that generational curses can be broken and that God can move us from His grace to His glory! Amen!

My mother Linda Albert is a 2001 Alumna of YCMW, and I must say her life change has had a phenomenal impact on me and my outlook on life. Prior to my mother's graduation I was an emotional wreck, I was a twelve year old girl without a mother. It was very traumatic! I experienced loss, separation and attachment issues, and I even contemplated suicide. I lost my faith and mocked GOD for separating us. My mother meant everything to me and before I knew it she was gone. I was elated and filled with joy, after a two year separation when we were united. From that day on, I accepted JESUS as my SAVIOR and never looked back.

My senior year of high school I started thinking vigorously about my future. I started applying to colleges. I got accepted into two colleges, Virginia Union University and Livingstone College. I selected Livingstone College, where I completed four years and obtained a Bachelors of Social Work Degree. Prior to graduation, I applied for graduate school and got accepted to Howard University School of Social Work program. Post graduation I was offered a position with the State of Maryland City Department of Social Services as a Family Services Caseworker. I gladly accepted and I currently serve children and families that are at risk. Everyday I thank GOD for blessing me with not only a career, but with the authority to change lives and lead people down the right path, the path of salvation and righteousness.



Lakia

30 Years And Still Bearing Fruit



Hi, my name is Carlos, I'm an alumni seed of Sonia Marks; a graduate of YCMW. I can easily say, that without Youth Challenge I would not be here letting you know how awesome God is. I was born into a world of drug addiction, but God transformed and saved my mother. Through that I

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S** myself saw first hand the change. I believed and received God into my own life. Through all my mess and troubles, God has always covered me.

This coming year I will celebrate my 26th birthday, the same age my father passed from drug addiction. That in itself is a victory - to be 26 as my father once was and be free, totally free, addicted to nothing but Jesus, Himself, Amen!!

My name is Ashley Wilks. When I was about 13 years old, my mother had become addicted to drugs for the second time in my life. But, this time was different! Because I was a teenager, it affected me worse than when I was a baby and didn't know any better. She had gone into several different programs, but none of them worked.

I myself became a cold person, and didn't allow anyone to get close to me—out of fear. I became rebellious and got into trouble. I also started doing drugs. When I was about 17, my mother went into YCMW program. This time around, I could just tell that it was going to be different. I was right, my mother returned to being the mother I remembered and missed dearly!

As she got better, so did I. I started growing up and acting like the smart young lady God meant for me to be. I've had my mother back for so long now that I don't even remember those hard times. I'm now 25, and my life is wonderful! I have a beautiful baby girl, an amazing fiancé, and I'm in college studying nursing, and I'm also planning a wedding for next year. I know if my mother didn't get healed and delivered, that I wouldn't be where I am today. I thank God for my wonderful life!



Ashley and Michaela



Youth Challenge is a gift sent from the heavens. It's a place of redemption, miracles, and blessings. Youth Challenge is a light around the world. YCMW opened the doors so my mother could be delivered from the evil of drug abuse. Without my mother being delivered, I wouldn't be pictured here today. I thank God for putting Youth Challenge in my life.

**J
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I am currently attending Goodwin College, majoring in Human Services. I play football for a team in Hartford and help to mentor young men. I also work at the YC Men's Home in the administrative office.

When I was five years old, my mother, Diane Rodriguez, graduated from Youth Challenge Mission for Women after a long life of drugs, abuse, and fear. If it wasn't for Bishop Raúl González' Vision and his choice to answer the call, I know that I would not be where I am today. I am a student at St. Joseph's College, where I am studying Social Work and minoring in Psychology.



Jessica

Throughout the years of my mother being a single parent, God was working in me and creating such an amazing plan for my life. He has given me a gift of worship and to lead His people into the presence of God. God also saw fit to give me another gift, a gift of a father. My mother married Antero Rodriguez who is also a graduate of Youth Challenge in 2009.

I am just a product of what Jesus can do if you surrender to His will and purpose. I know that I am unworthy, but God calls the unworthy to do things for Him because at the end of the day, He deserves all the honor and glory!

CONGRATS TO...

2011 Graduates



MELANIE



LEAH

YCMW Supervisor Shari Jennings became a Licensed Minister on July 8, 2011



REV. SHARI

30 Years And Still Planting Seed!



30 YEARS
Keep The Vision Dr. Raúl González Championed Alive!



Leah

Hi, my name is Leah and I am 24 years old. I grew up being known as “the Pastor’s daughter.” I sang in the choir, acted in the plays, and recited Scripture; but I did those things to win approval and compliments. **God wasn’t real to me; He was just a tool I could use to make others think the best of**

me. “Love” to me was when I received praise and commendation, and if I did not feel appreciated, admired, needed, useful, or valued by others then I believed that I had failed at life.

I graduated high school with a 3.6 GPA and a scholarship into the honors program at an accredited university. But the very day that I moved onto campus, I immediately began looking for someone to attach myself to, so that I may impress them. **That first night at college, I took my first drink.**

I began failing classes, and the group of friends that I had initially made, the ones that I was trying to impress, had to distance themselves from me as their lives moved forward and mine came to a screeching halt.

By the end of my first year at college, I had gone from being the honor student to being on academic probation. By the end of my sophomore semester, I was suspended and by the age of 21, I had gotten a criminal record; become involved in an adulterous relationship; homeless; severed ties with my family; a prostitute; and given up all hope for my life. I found myself digging in huge dumpsters for cardboard and tablecloths to sleep on and under, for things to sell and food to eat. I was truly “living among the pigs”, like the prodigal son.

I “came to my senses” while in jail for the third and last time. I entered the YCMW program on April 21, 2009 and completed my 18 months on Oct. 21, 2010. I am now a Jr. Staff at YCMW. My relationship with my family is stronger than it ever was even before my addiction. I will graduate on Oct. 15, 2011 and become a proud alumna of Youth Challenge.

In the future, I plan to go back to college and finish what I started. I desire to become a middle school teacher. I am not ashamed to worship God for what He has done in my life. Like the prodigal, I was dead and am alive again; I was lost and am now found. I thank God for YCMW, for Rev. Marva and Rev. Shari. They are true examples for me of what it is to be a godly woman of integrity. I know that if I follow them as they follow Christ, it will be said of me “God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.” Psalm 46:5 (NIV)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

I commit to giving to the Legacy: (Please check one)

One Time Gift
 \$1 a Day Challenge
 \$1,000, \$5,000 or \$10,000
 Other: \$ _____

COMING EVENTS AT YC

YOUTH CHALLENGE GRADUATION BANQUET

Plainfield, CT

OCTOBER 15, 2011 - 2:00 pm

Speaker: THE REV. GLORIA CHASSIE

For tickets please call 860 728-5199



Rev. Tyrone Glaspie, Director and wife, Rev. Jennifer YC Bible Training Center

YOUTH CHALLENGE ALUMNI SERVICE

NOVEMBER 25, 2011 - 7:30 pm

221-225 Greenfield St, Hartford, CT

YOUTH CHALLENGE ALUMNI HOMECOMING BANQUET

2012 DATE TBA—2 pm

221-225 Greenfield, St, Hartford, CT

For reservations call 860 728-5199



Rev. Victor Rodriguez Pres. of Alumni Association

Honorable Recognition To...

Rev. Marva Downes was recognized by The State of CT., City of Hartford and Office of The Treasurer on March 24, 2011 for her work at YCMW. Rev. Downes was nominated by The Permanent Commission on the Status of Hartford Women on their 6th Annual Women’s History Month. Photo taken by Gerry Doney.



Rev. Marva Downes, Dir.

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