

Community Women Against Hardship



2016 Summer Edition
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THE WONDERS WITHIN By Gwen Swan



The 3900 block of West Belle is not unlike most blocks in this part of Central West End. Two and three-story homes built in the late 18 and early 1900s, vacant lots and a few manufactured homes and abandoned churches are bracketed on either end by newer, lower- to middle-income residential and commercial rental units. The one architectural anomaly sits midway on the block, a yellowish, one-story building that might be a warehouse . . . or perhaps a temporary classroom for the overcrowded St. Louis Public School District.

The typical passerby will glance at the building, briefly wonder “what do they do inside there?” and keep going. But for those compelled or curious enough to ring the bell and inquire further, there are wonders (sometimes life-changing) within. Such was the case for Tanya (*pronounced like the color*) Darden.

The 33-year old mother of two was walking with her daughter when she saw the Community Against Hardship sign and rang the bell. Like many young women her age, Tanya was juggling a job, school, finances and motherhood, not as successfully as she wanted. That first visit to CWAH was a timely gift from God.

Tanya is a recent graduate from the University of Missouri with a degree in Liberal Studies with an emphasis on Sociology and Psychology, and a soon-to-be married woman with a wedding scheduled for this month. My interview with her revealed a young woman who plays her cards close to the vest, not revealing much about herself, but clearly independent and God-fearing. Tanya says; “I’m a great mother and enjoy helping others as much as I can.”

She became a CWAH client during the 2014 Christmas Family Program, where the MBA’s adopted her family and assisted her in attaining a much needed laptop to help further her studies. She eventually attended *Soup for the Soul, Job Readiness and Career Assessment & Counseling* classes. “I was only able to attend a couple of classes the first year, due to babysitting issues, but I always tried to refer others who could benefit from all that they offer. Shopping days allowed her an opportunity to get furniture for the living room and kitchen, household goods, bedding, clothing and many educational items for her family.

Tanya worked for a short while at Birthright Counseling before being laid off and staying at home for 1 ½ years during the pregnancy and birth of her second daughter. When she returned to school she was faced with acquiring loans and other financial aid to get her through. “Education is expensive and stressful, but I took it one day at a time,” said Tanya.

Currently she works as a Front Desk Associate at Extended Stay America. “It’s a temporary fix,” she says. She has a number of goals, including continuing her education with an eye on a Masters Degree in Human Resources . . . or perhaps a certification as a Physical Therapist . . . clearly focusing on careers that help others improve their lives.

Her greatest goal is to help train young men who are high school students and others without degrees to acquire meaningful and decent-paying jobs. Her advice to others, “Calm down, take a deep breath and focus on one goal at a time.”

We see you, Tanya! And although you play your cards close, just like CWAH, the wonders within **you** are clearly visible. Congratulations on your graduation, and the best of luck on your coming wedding.

ALL THE WONDERS YOU SEEK ARE WITHIN YOURSELF

Sir Thomas Browne



*Pictured above; Front row; Gloria Taylor, Clifford, Mary Ann Burton
Back Row: Kelly Byrd ED.D., Donald Nabors, PhD., Betty Walls, PhD, April Thomas, Julius B. Anthony, Keith Turner, Patricia Jones, Janice Jamison, and Loretta Strickland*

Literacy Night for Community Women Against Hardship (CWAH) Families

CWAH was thrilled to have Clifford the Big Red Dog and students from Harris - Stowe State University College of Education who organized a community Service Project where they received, One (1) Professional Development Credit, for their participation. This program was orchestrated under the direction of Betty Porter Walls, Ph.D. Assistant Professor and Lelia Vickers, Ph.D., Interim Dean. Students participated in one on one reading activities and now we have formed a partnership with the College of Education to have students come once a month as an ongoing project.

They were also joined by Julius B. Anthony Founder and President of St. Louis Black Authors of Children Literature Initiative along with a few of their inaugural authors, Illustrators and Mentors. These authors have written and published some remarkable books geared toward Early Literacy.

Statistics show that regardless of income levels or poverty, reading proficiency at the end of third grade has consistently been problematic for Black children in St. Louis, Missouri. This issue is particularly pronounced for children growing up in homes where early literacy experiences aren't common practice and age appropriate books are sparse. In addition, many children are less interested in books that do not reflect their daily experiences nor include culturally responsive images.

Please visit:
www.stlblackauthors.com



Prayer Breakfast

**WHEN: SATURDAY AUGUST 6, 2016
9:00 AM**

**WHERE : ST. ALPHONSUS "ROCK" CHURCH
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\$25 DONATION

**GUEST SPEAKER
REV. ROSALYN R. NICHOLS**

**PROCEEDS BENEFIT CWAH YOUTH PROGRAMS
and the
WILHELMINIA HARDEN PANTRY AT THE ROCK**

**CATERING BY
EXECUTIVE CHEF EUTLAN WELCH**



Rev. Dr. Rosalyn R. Nichols



Each year, CWAH offers a six week youth development program. This year the curriculum includes: Media Communications, Power-Point presentations, and Fine Arts. At the close of the sessions, we emphasize the value of understanding history, and create a leeway for them to see how it relates to their lives. This year we are endeavoring to go to TUSKEGEE. What was the Tuskegee experiment, who were the Tuskegee airmen, who was George Washington Carver, and Booker T. Washington? These questions and many more will be answered for our youth as they discover Tuskegee University and its role in African American history.

This program is committed to exposing our children to as much history as we possibly can. In the words of Marcus Garvey, "We have a beautiful history, and we shall create another in the future that will astonish the world." What a wonderful opportunity to be able to visit these important historical sites, and learn to appreciate what has been, and endeavor to fashion what can be.

Will you help sponsor a child today? Your tax deductible donation of \$25, \$50, \$100 or whatever you desire would greatly assist in this effort. To donate make checks payable to CWAH and mail to 3963 West Belle Pl, St. Louis, MO 63108 or visit www.cwah.org and go to online donations. For more info call (314) 289-7523.

Youth Enrichment Summer Program



Pictured above left, Bertha Myers instructed the class on how to make a commercial through Power Point presentations, Lois Ingram kept students engaged learning about mass media and the tools that support it, how to research topics in their interest and give pro/con assessment of the topics. Fine Arts teacher Byron Rogers, helped students create plaster figurines in all shapes and forms.

Pictured below students ages 5 to 10 years old enjoy a Scientific Summer trying to discover What's In Ned's Head, Which Items Will Sink or Float in water, What's The Sweetest Bud, testing four areas of their tongue to see which area detects the most sweetness from a dab of sugar. Magnet Mania, Life Cycle of a Plant, and much more were all exploratory fun activities with Jackie Griffin and Dr. Rona Robinson – Hill.





**Community Women
Against Hardship**

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**PROVIDING HOPE FOR
THOSE IN NEED**

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