

# ywca SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

# our voice



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www.ywcasgv.org

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
YWCA WINGS  
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## eliminating racism empowering women

## June 2010

**OUR MISSION** • *To eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.*



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All proceeds benefit YWCA San Gabriel  
Valley's programs for victims of  
domestic, senior citizens, and teens.

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LISA BRABO

### Thank you, Sponsors!

The Life and Leadership in a Diverse and Changing World Conference and Women of Achievement Awards Luncheon, to be held June 17, 2010, is made possible through the generous support of sponsors. Thank you sponsors!!

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Register online now at [www.ywcasgv.org](http://www.ywcasgv.org) or by calling 626-960-2995



### BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

### Teresa Figueras Mentors and Teaches Teen Parents

Teresa Figueras' job is to teach and mentor teen parents in the Hacienda La Puente Unified School District. Every day she's at work, she says she serves as a role model—the kind of role model she herself wishes she had when she was a teen living in an abusive household in LA's Pico Union barrio.

"Growing up, I thought that domestic abuse was part of every family," Teresa says. "I didn't understand how dysfunctional my family was until I got to college." She says she can empathize with the girls in her teen parent program who are told they are worthless or failures because they had a child before marriage.

"I constantly remind them that they can still continue their education and make something of themselves—as well as be good parents to their children," says Teresa. The old-

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## COMING EVENTS



### Life and Leadership in a Diverse and Changing World Conference and Women of Achievement Awards Luncheon

**Thursday, June 17, 2010**

To be held at Cal Poly Pomona,  
Bronco Student Center  
Please visit [www.ywcasgv.org](http://www.ywcasgv.org) for  
conference overview and  
sponsorship information.

### Register Online

Online registration is now available at [www.ywcasgv.org](http://www.ywcasgv.org) for the YWCA's Life and Leadership Conference for women, set for June 17 at Cal Poly Pomona's Bronco Student Union. \$75 registration includes a buffet breakfast, the Women of Achievement Luncheon, and afternoon reception.

Morning and afternoon workshops will feature panel speakers on topics such as leadership, dealing with stress, and new beginnings. More than 500 participants are expected, so register today to be part of this exciting conference. ■

est of five children, Teresa is the first person in her family to go to college. After earning a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education in her twenties, she worked as an educator for more than three decades before she returned to school and earned her master's in the same field on 2008.

The same year, she was recognized at the YWCA SGV's annual luncheon as one of the "Women of Achievement." Shortly after this, she was invited to join the YWCA's board of directors and readily agreed. "I feel honored to serve, and am grateful for the opportunity to make a difference, especially with our teen education programs," Teresa says.

After surviving physical and emotional abuse in two marriages, she says she's more committed than ever to break the cycle of domestic violence in our community. Starting with her own two children, Teresa emphasizes the importance of higher education as a way to escape the cycle.

Today, her 28-year old daughter Denise, is following in her mother's footsteps as a Head Start preschool teacher, having also earned her master's in 2008. Son, Enrique, is a sophomore at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in downtown LA.

"I owe so much to a woman who mentored me while I was in college," says Teresa. "I want to help other young women in the same way, starting in middle school and high school so they can achieve their greatest potential." ■

### New Grant Coincides with June 15 Elder Abuse Awareness Day



The Women's Foundation of California awarded a new grant to the YWCA SGV for an Elder Women's Abuse Prevention Project. The grant will support in-home violence prevention and early intervention for frail, linguistically isolated elder women at high risk for abuse in the San Gabriel Valley. "This is a wonderful opportunity to bring together our domestic violence and senior services expertise," says Lisa Brabo, Executive Director. The culturally and linguistically accessible services through this project will demonstrate how to effectively "abuse-proof" homes where care-giving is an ongoing need for elder women's independent living and healthy aging.

This project coincides perfectly with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15th. The goal of the day is to recognize elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue and to raise awareness to ultimately put an end to the abuse and neglect of older people. This annual observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is sponsored by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA). The theme for the day is "My World...Your World...Our World-Free of Elder Abuse". ■

### The Life and Legacy of Dr. Dorothy Irene Height (1912-2010)



Dr. Dorothy I. Height fought against race and gender prejudice her whole life – starting from the age of 12, when Dorothy demanded to speak to the manager after being denied entrance to a swimming pool because of the color of her skin. Since then, Height went on to participate in virtually all of the major civil rights events from the 1950s through the 1980s, to be a leader within the

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## YWCA SGV Programs

**Services for Domestic Violence Victims:** Shelter and support services so that adults and children can be safe, healthy, and lead violence-free lives.

**24-Hour Helpline 626-967-0658**

**Teen Education Program:** Presentations in schools about healthy relationships to prevent teen dating violence and provide assistance to teens in need.

**Services for Seniors:** Nutritious meals and care management so that elders can live in their own homes with independence and quality of life.

**24-Hour Message Line 626-214-9465**

**Leadership Development Opportunities** for women, girls and older adults

If you'd like to help the YWCA SGV save money and communicate more efficiently with you, please sign up (via one of the three options below) for our free email newsletter.

Sign up instantly at

[www.ywcasgv.org](http://www.ywcasgv.org)

Email us at

[info@ywcasgv.org](mailto:info@ywcasgv.org)

Give us a call at

(626) 214-9440

YWCA and the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), and to create and run programs that help millions of people around the world.

After earning her bachelor's and master's degrees from New York University, Height immediately started working on civil rights issues, serving as an organizer and eventually Vice President of the United Christian Youth Movement of North America. This work led her to the YWCA, where she spent the next 40 years, working her way up from Assistant Executive Director of the Harlem YWCA to the Executive Director of the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA in Washington, D.C. and finally to the staff of the YWCA National Board where she worked from 1944 to 1977.

Height played a major role in helping shape the YWCA's focus on racial and social justice issues. During the 1946 YWCA convention, she fought to ensure integration of YWCA facilities nationwide. She became Director of the newly created Center for Racial Justice at the YWCA in 1965, and at the organization's 1970 convention, worked to establish a core imperative of the YWCA mission – the elimination of racism.

She also worked with Mary McLeod Bethune at the NCNW, fighting for equal employment, pay and education for women. She served as NCNW's president from 1957 to 1998, helping organize "Wednesdays in Mississippi," which worked to open communication between women of different races; creating programs to address housing, teen parenting, and hunger issues; and establishing the Black Family Reunion Celebration in 1986. She served as Chair Emeritus of NCNW, going to work every day until shortly before her 98th birthday.

Height was at the forefront of every major civil rights event of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, including working with Martin Luther King, Jr., to plan the 1963 March on Washington – the only woman to help plan the march. Much of her civil rights work was done from the platform of the YWCA during her tenure directing the Center for Racial Justice. She has been an advisor to administrations from Roosevelt to Obama, and has received 36 honorary degrees from universities and colleges. Height was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994 by President Clinton and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004, the two highest civilian honors. ■



## Schools, YWCA Join in Stand Against Racism Day

Three local high schools and the YWCA SGV were among 2,000 organizations nationwide to participate in Stand Against Racism Day in April. The event, sponsored through a partnership of 71 YWCAs across the country, was intended to raise awareness of racism and discrimination in our communities.

Students at Alverno High in Sierra Madre, Charter Oak High in Covina, and Diamond Ranch High in Diamond Bar wore "Stand Against Racism" buttons and opened dialogues about how to combat racism at school and in the larger world.

At the YWCA SGV, a community open house drew dozens of business and civic leaders who participated in interactive exercises designed to educate people about the legacy of racism in the U.S. and to remind them about how racism hurts everyone.

"I think everyone came away with some new bit of knowledge and a renewed commitment to fighting racism in our workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, and communities," says Lisa Brabo, Executive Director of the YWCA SGV.

Lisa notes that her organization hopes to build on the success of this year's event and involve many more organizations, both public and private, next year. To learn more, visit [www.standagainstracism.org](http://www.standagainstracism.org). ■

