

YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL OF CHICAGO
Annual Report: 2009-10 Academic Year

The 2009-10 academic year was a special one as the Young Women's Leadership Charter School community celebrated its 10th year anniversary. Supporters, teachers, staff and students reflected throughout the year on the successes YWLCS has had since 2000 in preparing students to graduate from high school, excel in college and lead productive and fulfilling lives. Class of 2010 Valedictorian, Staci Morris, described her experience at YWLCS:

College is one of the main goals of Young Women's Leadership Charter School...and YWLCS made sure we knew the process of selecting a career and applying for college. The class we had during our junior year helped a lot. I applied to 13 schools and was accepted to all of them... I have developed skills during my years at YWLCS that will help me throughout my life. I will never forget the time I spent at YWLCS.

Staci Morris, YWLCS Class of 2010

Staci plans to attend Tennessee State University in Fall 2010

Excerpt from Senior Reflection

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Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago (YWLCS) is a small single-sex public school that educates ordinary Chicago public school girls, but achieves extra-ordinary results. In 2009-10, YWLCS was a teaching and learning community consisting of 344 students (chosen by lottery), 29 teachers and 24 staff members – allowing for a 1:12 teacher to student ratio in our school building.

As a charter school, YWLCS uses a lottery admission system instead of a merit-based admission system. Therefore, our students are representative of students in the Chicago Public School (CPS) system as a whole. Nearly 2/3s of our girls arrive performing at least one grade level behind, while 80% of our students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, indicating that they come from households with a low family income. Seventy seven percent of our students are African American, 15.2% are Latina, 7.1% are Caucasian, and .7% are Asian. YWLCS admits students from across the city and in 2009-2010 students came from nearly 30 different Chicago zip codes.

There is much to celebrate about this year, our tenth year as an innovative and effective urban public school. Here are some highlights from the 2009-10 school year:

- We are proud to announce that 100% of our 2010 Senior Class graduated in May and 82% of those have been accepted to attend college! This Fall, our recent graduates will attend colleges and universities such as Michigan State University, Tennessee State University, DePaul University, University of Illinois at Chicago and at Urbana-Champaign, Arizona State University, as well as at Sweet Briar College in Virginia.
- We are pleased to report that Chicago Public Schools (CPS) renewed YWLCS' charter in May 2010. This is the third time that YWLCS has had its charter renewed by CPS since the school opened in 2000.
- We are grateful for our generous donors. At our Second Annual Girl Power Benefit Luncheon in April 2010, the school raised \$415,000 and students played a major role during the event program. Students introduced our two honorees and keynote speaker

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Melody Hobson, gave speeches about their experiences at YWLCS, and showcased some of their school projects to our nearly 800 guests.

- We are supported by remarkable women. YWLCS was pleased to honor Dr. Teresa Woodruff and Megan Faurot of Northwestern University with our first-ever Leadership Award at the 2010 Girl Power Benefit Luncheon. YWLCS honored Dr. Woodruff and Ms. Faurot for creating the Oncofertility Saturday Academy (OSA). This program has challenged our students for the past three years to explore the sciences in ways that they never imagined and has introduced them to worlds of opportunity beyond their dreams.
- We are strengthened by remarkable partners. YWLCS received a \$156,000 grant for Chicago Youth Centers (CYC) to implement and manage a robust after-school program at YWLCS during the 2009-10 academic year. Nearly 150 students participated in almost 15 different clubs this past year!

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PROGRESS ON 2009-10 STRATEGIC GOALS

In order to educate the young women at YWLCS, our community stands on four pillars: (1) academic achievement; (2) career and college preparation; (3) leadership development, and (4) personal and social development. Below is a summary of activities in each pillar that took place during the 2009-10 academic school year.

Academic Achievement

Strategic Goal:

Enhance learning environments to foster higher order thinking and to authentically engage students in order to increase their academic growth.

When I entered the Young Women's Leadership Charter School, the teachers and students immediately welcomed me. The teachers pushed me hard and now I am confident in the work that I do, and have the attitude of never giving up!

Venee Garnett, YWLCS Class of 2010

Venee plans to attend Chicago State University in Fall 2010.

Excerpt from Senior Reflection

YWLCS teachers made the learning process engaging and informative for our students inside and outside of the classroom. Below are a few examples of programs and activities that took place to foster higher order thinking and to authentically engage students in order to increase their academic growth.

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ReSISTERS: 2nd Annual Social Justice Forum

YWLCS students hosted a Social Justice Forum at the school in March 2010 for families, supporters and community members. The Forum was borne out of the students' Humanities classes and the theme was "ReSISTERS: Pushing for Change in our World." Students played the role of activists and presented information that showed how individuals throughout history have sought to affect change through collective resistance and struggle within communities. All grade levels participated in the Forum.

One of the presentations included a Middle East Policy Debate among 12th grade students, who played the role of United States policy makers and debated possible policy reform related to this dynamic and controversial region. Students also hosted special guest, Nelson Peery, an American political activist and author, who sat on a panel with students to discuss local and global issues facing the community. Other presentations included "Women's Rights" by the 7th grade class, "Community Activism" by the 9th grade class, and "The Trial of Andrew Carnegie" by the 10th grade class.

Project Exploration

This past year, our students participated in two programs provided by Project Exploration, an organization that works to ensure that communities traditionally overlooked by science—particularly minority youth and girls—have access to personalized experiences with science and scientists. YWLCS thanks its long-time partner, Project Exploration, for providing YWLCS girls with access to personalized experiences with science and scientists!

Exploring Science at Yellowstone

During the Summer of 2009, several YWLCS students participated in Project Exploration's "All Girls Expedition," (or AGE) where they had the opportunity to have a week of intensive classroom sessions and gained training in biology, chemistry, and geology. The students then traveled to Yellowstone National Park and worked alongside park rangers and scientists, applying the knowledge and skills they learned in the classroom, such as testing water quality with scientists from the Thermal Biology Institute and tracking a collared coyote with the Yellowstone Ecological Research Center.

Sisters4Science Program

During the Spring of 2010, YWLCS students participated in Project Exploration's Sisters4Science program, a weekly science and leadership program for Chicago middle school girls. During the program, YWLCS students co-created the curriculum by choosing what types of science they wanted to investigate including forensic science, animals and chemistry. The sessions were facilitated by professional women scientists.

Oncofertility Saturday Academy (OSA)

Northwestern University's Institute for Women's Health Research's (IWHR) goal is to make sure many YWLCS students are part of the next generation of women leaders in science and medicine. Last year was the third year that YWLCS junior and senior students have participated in the Institute's program, Oncofertility Saturday Academy (OSA), a hands-on Saturday science program at Northwestern University's campus provided exclusively to YWLCS students. Led by Dr. Teresa Woodruff and Megan Faurot (a former YWLCS biology teacher), the program allows our students to explore the fields of reproductive science and cancer biology, as well as oncofertility, a new field that develops fertility options for those who have been diagnosed with

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cancer and who must undergo potentially fertility-threatening treatment. The program exposes our students, such as Charneka Hopkins, to the possibilities of pursuing a career in science or medicine, who participated in the Junior Oncofertility Saturday Academy (JOSA) in Spring 2010:

Participating in OSA has given me an opportunity to narrow my career choices to the field of science. Before OSA, I thought medicine was a field for men, but after meeting so many powerful women through this program, I know that women can be just as good if not better.

-- Charneka Hopkins, Class of 2011. Charneka participated in the Junior Oncofertility Saturday Academy (JOSA) in Spring 2010

By the end of the 5-week program, students like Charneka are empowered to make informed, authoritative decisions about their personal health and have had a chance to explore the variety of college academic programs and career choices in the fields of science and medicine.

YWLCs thanks Dr. Woodruff and Ms. Faurot for providing our girls with access to personalized experiences in the medical field and for the opportunity for them to learn directly from scientists and doctors!

Cardiology Summer Academy (CSA)

The Oncofertility Saturday Academy was so successful that Dr. Teresa Woodruff and Megan Faurot expanded programming to YWLCs students to include a Cardiology Summer Academy (CSA) during the Summer of 2009.

Led by Martha Gulati, M.D., a Distinguished Physician in Women's Cardiovascular Health, students experienced an intense one-week program to learn about the field of cardiology and cardiovascular disease prevention. Last summer, students even got to watch an open-heart surgery being performed! Part of the program included healthy eating and exercise sessions so that the girls could personally experience what it takes to prevent heart disease. One of our students' mothers noted, "Because of this program, my daughter is now making the family take walks together after dinner!"

Dr. Gulati wrote an article about the CSA program that was published in a national cardiology trade publication. Now, other cardiologists at university hospitals around the country are asking, "How can I replicate this program for high school girls in my community?" In addition to the cardiology and oncofertility programs, Dr. Woodruff and Ms. Faurot plan to provide programs to YWLCs students about Infectious Disease and Physical Science during the Summer of 2010.

YWLCs Science Fair

Each year, the YWLCs Science Department partners with the Friends of the Chicago River to provide YWLCs students the opportunity to investigate the water at the Chicago River. Students present their research and investigation of the water quality in the river at the annual YWLCs Science Fair, which was held on October 21, 2009. This past year, YWLCs students visited two new sites: Camp Sagawau and Bubbly Creek. Camp Sagawau is the new site that the Friends of the Chicago River helped us secure so that our students could conduct experiments, work on restoration (cutting down invasive plants), and go on a nature hike each year.

The 7th and 11th grade students investigated fecal coliform (a bacteria present in sewage) and macro-invertebrates ("bugs" that live in the water) while the 9th and 10th grade classes studied the chemistry of the river and determined the water quality. The 8th grade class studied how fast rivers flow. Additionally, YWLCs became an Adopt-a-River school this past year since our

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students have been so involved in researching the Chicago River for the last several years.

Focus on Increasing Students' State Standardized Test Scores

YWLCS' high school graduation rate, college attendance and college graduation statistics attest to the faculty and staff's efforts in preparing the girls for college level work. However, at the same time, the majority of our students have not yet met proficiency on the required state standardized tests. This has been due to our students' lack of familiarity with these tests and the school's need to better align the YWLCS curriculum with the state standards. In order to help our students improve their test scores on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE), the YWLCS faculty utilized Interim Assessments throughout the 2009-10 school year. Each Assessment was aligned with specific standards required by the state tests. The Interim Assessments are designed to track student progress, and also to give students a chance to practice test-taking strategies in a low-pressure environment.

The efforts taken to improve students' test scores during the past year netted positive results. Our 11th grade students collectively made a 1.1 point gain over last year's composite score on the PSAE. This gain equates to 3 trend points for the Chicago Public Schools' Performance Policy. We will receive information about our students' ISAT results at the end of summer 2010.

In conjunction with the Interim Testing, several other programs and activities were initiated to further help students and parents prepare for testing:

- A Student Test Statistic Report is provided to students, parents and teachers. The report identifies and explains areas of needed improvement and opportunities to re-teach concepts.
- Student-developed study groups were formed to focus on improving test performance.
- PSAE-like assessment questions are integrated into 11th grade classroom tests and daily instruction. As an example, Math teachers are now using daily PSAE class openers ("bell-ringers") and Reading and Writing teachers teach PSAE vocabulary and test taking strategies daily. Additionally, PSAE prep is offered to 11th graders through after-school and Saturday school programs, in collaboration with Chicago Youth Centers. All students who have been attending regularly increased their scores.

Career and College Preparation

Strategic Goal:

Maintain school-wide infusion of programming from grades 7-12 and develop a coherent programming sequence to introduce the young women to a range of college and post-secondary options and opportunities.

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The career and college prep course that I took my junior year of high school was very helpful to me because it has helped prepare me for my post secondary education. When I finished this class, I felt that I was prepared to plan the next stage of my life because I learned how to effectively apply and get accepted into a university.

Victoria Horsley, YWLCS Class of 2010

Victoria plans to attend Ursinus College in Pennsylvania in Fall 2010.

Excerpt from Senior Reflection

The Young Women's Leadership Charter School (YWLCS) continues to pursue its mission of preparing young women for college and assuring their subsequent academic success. We currently have students at Smith and Spelman, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Illinois Institute of Technology, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Michigan State University, as well as college graduates who are in graduate school and who work as professionals in Illinois.

As soon as students arrive at YWLCS in 7th grade, our teachers waste no time in introducing career and college possibilities to them. Many incoming students have little, if any, exposure to, knowledge of, and connections with college-educated career women. Many of our students will be the first in their families to go to college. Given the realities about many of our students and their lives, YWLCS promotes a culture in which all girls are encouraged to open themselves up to many different career possibilities, as well as the idea that they can go to college and succeed.

Recent qualitative research has shown the importance of our college prep program in assuring college success. Our graduates have cited the encouragement they received at YWLCS; many have told us that they had "not thought of college" or had "not believed it was possible" until they learned otherwise at our school. Close relationships with faculty and an emphasis on leadership have resulted in the cultivation of young women who are able to "self advocate." Faced with obstacles, our students form relationships with faculty, ask for help (and receive it) and avail themselves of remedial programs when necessary. Many of our alumnae attributed these actions to the YWLCS culture.

Below are some of the activities that took place this past year in order to get our youngest and oldest students to think about different career choices and that going to college is well within their reach.

7th Grade Students Tour a University: Starting to Think about their College Choices

For the fourth year, YWLCS took the 7th grade students to visit the campus of University of Illinois at Chicago in April 2010. Since many of the students had never been on a college campus before, they took the opportunity to ask the tour guide many questions about the campus and college in general. Students rotated through different activities on the tour including a hands-on engineering session; an informational "scavenger hunt" where they learned about the college application process; and a recreation session where they went to the campus bowling alley to see how exercise elevates their heart rates. Overall, it was a successful way to get the girls to start considering their future college options.

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Students STEP-UP at Smith College

YWLCs' middle school students participated in Smith College's STEP-UP program (Summer Talent Exploration Program- Unleashing Potential) during the Summer 2009. This weeklong program on Smith's campus allowed our middle school students to explore their talents while learning about college. The students participated in workshops, exploratory activities, public speaking, the arts, and health/wellness activities.

Career Day for Juniors and Seniors

YWLCs 11th and 12th grade students participated in Career Day at the school in March 2010. Students rotated among different rooms that featured 40 professionals representing different fields, Law, Arts & Communications, Social Services, Medicine, Finance, Business, Architecture, Engineering and Technology. Students enjoyed the personal stories and advice that the professionals shared.

Class of 2009 Gets a Target Send-off to College

YWLCs' 2009 graduates received a warm send-off to college by YWLCs Board member Liz Kramer Lefkofsky and her husband Eric Lefkofsky in Summer 2009 at Target! For the 2nd year in a row, the Lefkofskys treated YWLCs graduates to a Target shopping trip. Each student got to buy \$150 worth of school supplies and dorm room furnishings for their first year in college. YWLCs sends a huge thank you to Liz and Eric for helping our graduates get ready for their first year in college!

Leadership Development

Strategic Goal:

Increase leadership opportunities for all students in classrooms, school wide and in the community through coaching and mentoring to empower students to achieve a model of ethical and collaborative leadership.

As the first girl out of seven children in my family to go to college, I am thankful to my teachers for helping me gain confidence and inspiring me to become a leader at my school. In the fall, I will attend Tennessee State University where I will study to become a psychologist.

- Ta'Kia Pillow, YWLCs Class of 2010
Excerpt from Senior Reflection

As evident in the name of our school, the Young Women's Leadership Charter School of Chicago places high emphasis on the development of leaders. Our young women from grades 7-12 are expected to graduate from YWLCs with a clear understanding of what it means to be a leader and with the tools necessary to act as moral, ethical leaders in their post-secondary educational and professional experiences.

Below is a sample of leadership activities at YWLCs during the 2009-10 academic year.

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New Leadership Curriculum Developed

During the 2009-10 school year, a YWLCS teacher, Shawn Sanders, developed a new leadership curriculum and piloted it with 9th – 11th grade students once a week. Based on the success of that project, during the 2010-11 school year Ms. Sanders will teach an ethical leadership class to 7th and 9th grade students and working with other teachers to infuse leadership activities in classroom curriculum taught to 8th and 10th-12th grades .

Students Take the Lead: Student Government

YWLCS students attended the Coalition of Essential Schools' (CES) Summer Institute in Rhode Island during the Summer of 2009. YWLCS students collaborated with students from other schools across the nation to develop a model for the YWLCS Student Leadership Team. The young women who participated in the CES conference brought back to YWLCS what they learned about organizing student council elections.

In November 2009, YWLCS students became political candidates, while their peers signed up to be their campaign managers and communications directors. Candidates campaigned that they would fight for healthier lunches, cleaner bathrooms, and making sure students have a voice at the school. Using the power and efficiency of technology, student candidates videotaped their campaign speeches touting why they should be elected. Students watched the speeches while in their Advisories, and voted shortly thereafter. After an intense two-week period of plastering their campaign signs throughout the school for Student Government President, Vice President, Secretary or class representative, democracy prevailed and orderly elections produced our new student government leaders!

This year's Student Government leaders focused their attention on a Healthy School Campaign by talking to healthy food experts, researching how to change the lunch menu in the school cafeteria, and meeting with Board members and staff to brainstorm how to kick-off the Campaign.

They also made time to raise \$500 from their peers for their Pennies for Patients Fundraiser on behalf of the Lymphoma and Leukemia Society. Emira Mamuti, who was the 2009-10 Student Body President and was a sophomore last year, explained why the Student Government chose to present this campaign to students: "We wanted to find a project where students could be involved in doing something for others outside of the school. Our Student Government Advisor received a flyer about the Pennies for Patients campaign and when she showed it to us, we were excited because it was exactly what we were looking to get the students involved in!"

Students Organize a Haiti Relief Program

When the Haiti earthquake occurred in early 2010, YWLCS students rallied around efforts to collect donations to send to Haiti. A few YWLCS teachers have family members in Haiti, which made the relief efforts even more personal. Students organized a drive that collected toiletries, clothes, food, bottled water, and financial donations that were all sent to Haiti. Students also held fundraisers by selling chips, candy, lollipops and key chains with all of the proceeds going to the Haitian Congress to Fortify Haiti.

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YWLCS Student Becomes Part of the Solution to Stop Violence

Asia Black, a YWLCS 2010 graduate, has been a member of the Mikva Challenge Youth Safety Council for the last few years, and participated as a panelist at a community forum at the DuSable Museum in Spring 2010. Asia described her experience with the Council: "We research root causes of violence, attend workshops, meet with city officials, and find out what everyone in Chicago is doing to reduce violence. We also created a blueprint to peace, which includes solutions that we think will help reduce violence. This year we implemented mentoring programs, yoga classes, and safe passage (helping students get to and from school) for middle school students. We decided to focus on the younger kids because we think we need to figure out how to prevent violence at earlier ages."

Students Organize 2nd Annual Arts Coffee House

Rana Tuggle, a YWLCS 2010 graduate who is attending Sweet Briar College in Virginia, had a vision. An artistic type, Rana was determined to organize and showcase YWLCS' first-ever Arts Coffee House at YWLCS. After rallying her peers around her vision, she and other students successfully kicked off the 1st Annual Arts Coffee House at the school in Spring 2009. It was so successful that Rana and her peers led the effort to organize and produce the 2nd Annual Arts Coffee House in November 2009. The Arts Coffee House is an opportunity for YWLCS students to showcase their talents before their peers, teachers, families, and friends. The program last Fall was jam-packed with beautiful performances of song, dance, and spoken word by YWLCS students grade 7-12, as well as YWLCS staff. The event offered the opportunity for guests and performers to mix and mingle, enjoy light refreshments, and participate in a silent auction of student artwork displayed around the performance hall.

Personal and Social Development

Strategic Goal:

Provide systems and models for the desired behaviors of the Community Contract, the YWLCS 5 qualities (respectful, responsible, scholarly, creative, hard-working) and the foundation for living healthy and fit lives.

I feel that I have learned so much and grown up more at YWLCS than I would have at any other school. I am grateful that the school is around for my sisters to attend so that they can have a similar educational experience.

Melissa Johnston, Class of 2010

Melissa plans to attend DePaul University Fall 2010

Excerpt from Senior Reflection

YWLCS recognizes that unless a girl is well-supported by an extended community and resources, she often falters on her path to a productive and fulfilling future. Learning in a safe, productive and positive community and creating and sustaining it is everyone's responsibility. Therefore, YWLCS students and staff drafted the Community Contract which spells out 8 basic rights and corresponding responsibilities of every member of the school community. As an

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example, the girls have a right to express their opinions freely and respectfully at appropriate times and in an appropriate manner. Likewise, each girl has the responsibility to listen and not be disruptive and to respect others' ideas and opinions, even if different from their own.

All YWLCS students are assigned to an advisory group in which they receive individualized attention and guidance from a teacher. All girls are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. Recognizing that many of our students may confront not only the typical challenges of maturation from adolescence to young adulthood, but also additional barriers arising from community poverty, YWLCS provides additional social services and programs, coordinated by our student support team, which includes two full-time social workers. Additionally, YWLCS houses a school-based health clinic in partnership with the University of Illinois at Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative Division of Community Health.

Finally, the small school structure at YWLCS allows for relationship-driven education, which transforms the trajectory of students' lives. Within the school community, every student is known by name and knows that she has allies and support for her success at YWLCS. Below are some activities that helped develop our students' social and personal growth during the 2009-10 school year.

New After-School Programs for YWLCS Students

During the 2009-10 school year, YWLCS received a \$156,000 grant to help fund a robust after-school program led by Chicago Youth Centers (CYC), which is a Bridgeport organization that invests in youth in underserved Chicago neighborhoods to help them discover and realize their full potential. This is the first time that YWLCS had a comprehensive after-school program with paid staff to support these efforts. Because of the grant, there was no cost for students to participate in the programming. Nearly 150 YWLCS students participated in the programming, which included the following clubs:

- o ACT Prep Club
- o Community Service Club
- o Service-Learning Club
- o Cosmetology Club
- o Dance Club
- o Golf Club
- o Drama Club
- o Fashion Design Club
- o Graphic Arts Club
- o Indoor Tennis Club
- o Modeling Club
- o Soccer Conditioning Club
- o Teen Summit

The CYC after-school program benefited our students greatly and gave them a safe place to be after school. Additionally, it gave our students an opportunity to try different activities for free, and allowed them to learn more about their interests. The partnership was such a success that we are thrilled that CYC will join YWLCS again during the 2010-11 academic year to provide after-school programming to our students.

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Girls Attend Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky's POWER Lunch

Ten YWLCS high school students had the opportunity to attend Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky's Annual POWER Lunch in Spring 2010 at the invitation of a YWLCS Board member. The students networked with professional women, were introduced during the luncheon program by Congresswoman Schakowsky, and even had the opportunity to meet the Luncheon's keynote speaker, Helen Thomas. It was a great experience for the students to try out their etiquette skills, and to be exposed to a room full of 1,000 accomplished women.

Strive for Five

At the time of the school's founding, the entire community worked together to define the "YWLCS Girl." They agreed that she would exhibit 5 Qualities -- respectful, responsible, creative, hardworking and scholarly. During the 2009-10 school year, the 9th grade students participated in a program called Strive for Five. The program is a student-run contest that awards students in six categories: Responsible, Hardworking, Scholarly, Creative, Respectful, plus an All-Star who demonstrated all 5 qualities. Students received letters containing peer commentary about themselves, a YWLCS t-shirt and a flower. The winning students of these categories took pride in their award and felt glad that their peers recognized that they have these great qualities.

Math Pride Award

The Math Pride Award (MPA) is a peer-nominated award program that the math department implemented to motivate students in their math classes. At the end of each month, the students nominated one of their peers in their math class who exhibited the qualities of Math **PRIDE** – **P**ersevering, **R**espectful, **I**nquisitive, **D**aring, **E**nthusiastic. Many students who did not feel confident in math or who were not strong in math won this award and felt proud that their peers recognized their efforts in the classroom. Math teachers noticed a change in attitude in those girls who won the award for the month. Said one teacher, "It was exciting to watch their faces as they were surprised to earn this recognition from their peers. The other students were always very quick to congratulate the winner and encourage them in their math work. It helped create an encouraging, welcome environment where all students felt they were capable of winning this award, no matter at what level they came into the class."

Measures of Our Success

Because YWLCS was created to empower young women to overcome barriers to leading productive and fulfilling lives, YWLCS has committed itself to developing a school where urban girls graduate from high school and go on to college. Therefore, we measure our success in terms of promotion, drop-out, and high school graduation rates, as well as college application, acceptance and enrollment rates.

Promotion, and High School Graduation Rates

- At the end of the 2009-10 academic year, the promotion rate at YWLCS across all grades was 85%.

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- On average, 95% of YWLCS seniors graduate from high school.

Application, Enrollment and Graduation in Post-Secondary Education

- On average, 80% of YWLCS graduates start college or other post-secondary education in the fall following graduation.
- The majority of YWLCS students who entered college in 2004 and 2005 are continuing in school and expect a degree within the next year. By stark contrast, the most recent research indicates that only 8% of Chicago public school graduates will obtain a college degree by the age of 25.

All of these statistics demonstrate that YWLCS is achieving its goals and is an agent of transformation for the girls who attend the school. While many of the girls who enter here are under-prepared and from low-income homes - often barriers to success for many Chicago Public School students- at YWLCS they graduate from high school, go on to college, and are well-prepared to become productive and contributing members of our community.

YWLCS and Our Vision for the Future

The Young Women's Leadership Charter School (YWLCS) has demonstrated that one small school dedicated to the success of young women can indeed empower young women to believe that they can and will go to college and become successful contributors to their community and the world. YWLCS will continue to move forward with a renewed passion and tenacity to fulfill our vision that "All young women will have the skills, tools and opportunities to develop as ethical leaders shaping their lives and the world."

Financial Reporting

YWLCS closed its books for the 2009-10 year on June 30, 2010. An unaudited statement of revenues and expenses is enclosed. Also, enclosed is a list of 2009-10 donors. The annual audit begins in August and a final audit report will be delivered to YWLCS in November.

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