

# POWERFUL ALTERNATIVES

A Newsletter for Supporters of Alternatives For Girls | Winter 2022

## LETTER FROM THE CEO: 2022 ROLE MODEL CELEBRATION

Sarah-Grace Motley Marketing & Communications Manager



ALMA  
CROSSLEY



DR. GWENDOLYN  
PARKER

It's time to celebrate AFG's 35th anniversary and we invite you to join us at our Role Model Celebration on March 30, 2022 at MGM Grand Detroit. This event celebrates and honors the accomplishments of extraordinary women in our community and the achievements of the girls and young women AFG serves.

The inspiration for Alternatives For Girls began in 1985 when a group of southwest Detroit residents, clergy, and business people started to share concerns about the alarming increase in drug use, homelessness, prostitution, and street activity among girls and young women. Originally a small, volunteer-run program operating a five-bed emergency shelter in a neighborhood church, AFG has evolved into a multi-service agency with over 75 employees. This year, we commemorate the thousands of girls and young women AFG has empowered over the past 35 years and the staff and other stakeholders who have supported us along the way.

This year's Role Model Celebration will honor four remarkable women in our community.

**Alma Crossley** is the Director for Corporate Diversity GM. In her position, Alma works to establish relationships with key advocacy groups and consults across various GM functions to achieve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals. She also leads the GM Employee Resource Groups in building a sense of community and belonging at GM.

**Dr. Gwendolyn Parker** is a board-certified radiation oncologist and currently is the Medical Director in Care Management at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, where she has worked for 28 years. Dr. Parker serves as a mentor to many. She has a passion for teaching and helping others to grow and develop.

**Sabrina Galloway** is a visionary, strategist, entrepreneur, and philanthropist. She has combined her talents to help construct and develop the business and philanthropic enterprise of her husband, NBA veteran Langston Galloway. As Chief Strategist, Sabrina has helped to form the Langston Galloway Foundation, The Langston Galloway Basketball Camp, and most recently, Ethics Shoes.

**Kim Ray** is an attorney at Ford Motor Credit Company. While working as a legal assistant earlier in her career and raising two children, Kim went to law school on the weekends to earn her law degree. She has also been a strong advocate on the right to counsel in tenant defense cases and, more recently, on issues impacting transgender individuals seeking name changes.



SABRINA  
GALLOWAY



KIM  
RAY



SCAN HERE TO  
GET YOUR TICKET!

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CEO: AMANDA (AMY) L. GOOD

With the dawn of 2022, we at AFG are excited to have reached our 35th anniversary year! We are planning a range of events and activities throughout the year to celebrate the impact we have seen for thousands of girls and young women. Their powerful accomplishments—academic degrees, excellent performance in good jobs, healthy and happy parenting, the launch of social impact organizations, and overall positive contributions to our community—reverberate across multiple generations.

This is a year of significant growth, thanks to strong and growing partnerships, generous donors, and significant grants that have been awarded due to our past performance in recent years. Having demonstrated the statistical success of our pregnancy prevention/personal responsibility work with high school girls, we are launching a second, five-year rigorous research grant, bringing a revised version of our "LeadHer" project to Detroit middle school girls. We will provide a range of tools for academic and life success and help them build leadership, resilience, risk avoidance, and other life skills. We are expanding our work with victims and survivors of domestic violence, providing emergency housing and other safety measures and support. We will soon open AFG's Little Dreamers Child Care Center, for the first time in our history, to be able to provide on-site child care for our shelter residents, enabling them to pursue job interviews, employment, school, and health services while their young children are cared for "at home." The child care center will also provide opportunities for parenting coaching as well as job training for child care employment. Finally, our new workforce development coordination project is revving up this winter, with a new "job club" and a growing pool of employer partners. Our participants are making great strides, winning scholarships for industrial sewing training, securing management positions, and earning wages to create security and long-term career goals.



What a joy it is to be part of AFG's powerful work and to know that we—staff, volunteers, donors, partners, alongside our participants—are making a difference for thousands of individual lives and in our community overall.

## HOUSING STABILITY: TOYIA YANCEY STAFF FEATURE

Christie Jackson Marketing & Development Fellow

Toyia Yancey serves as the new Director of Housing Stability at AFG. In 2018, Yancey began her role at Alternatives For Girls as the Manager of Rapid Re-Housing, which provides homeless youth with rental assistance for their first 12 months in long-term housing. With years of experience and expertise in non-profit work, from Southwest Solutions and the American Red Cross, Yancey launched the Rapid Re-Housing program herself, with only one grant and a team of three. Her team goes above and beyond for the people they serve, not only providing rental assistance but also utilizing extra funding and in-kind donations to provide furniture and other move-in items for approximately 45 participants each year. Under Yancey's leadership, Rapid Re-Housing has increased its funding from one grant to four and expanded its team of three to six, allowing them to now serve 100 participants a year.

But Yancey's success is more than numbers. After following up with half of the participants from year one, Yancey was delighted to discover that they are all stably housed, graduated from either college or trade school, and someone even purchased a house. One of the participants applied for a Peer Educator position, a paid role reserved for people that have gone through the Rapid Re-Housing program successfully and want to encourage current participants to continue on the right path.

Yancey's dedication and leadership are also recognized outside of Alternatives For Girls. She and her team are often called to discuss the success of their Rapid Re-Housing program at conferences. One of them was the 2019 Point Source Youth Conference at New York University, a three-day conference with over 700 attendees to discuss youth homelessness interventions and advocacy. In 2020, she also received her MS in Human and Social Services from Walden University while being a mother to two wonderful children.

So, this is undoubtedly a busy time for Yancey. Double the staff means double the training, and she is often offering guidance to the new team members—all while building the behind-the-scenes processes and procedures to ensure the success of the program expansion. During this busy transition, she is grateful for the unwavering support of Katie Carlisle, Rapid Housing Program Manager, and Carolyn Rayford, Shelter Director. Katie Carlisle, was the first person hired to her team and played an instrumental role in keeping everything on track, serving as the primary point person for the new staff. As for Carolyn Rayford, Toyia Yancey says, "[Rayford] was my boss before I was promoted to Director. She really believed in me. It was always part of my development plan to become a Director, and now I am." Yancey strives to be an advocate and leader, the way Rayford has advocated for her success since 2018.

Yancey's passion and drive are truly inspiring, and her innovative strategizing has launched our housing program to new heights. We are thankful to have her at Alternatives For Girls, and we are excited for her continued success in the upcoming year.



903 West Grand Boulevard  
Detroit, MI 48208

Phone: 313-361-4000  
Fax: 313-361-8938  
Crisis Line: 888-AFG-3919  
[www.AlternativesForGirls.org](http://www.AlternativesForGirls.org)

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