

# eliminating racism empowering women

## ywca news release

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### YWCA KALAMAZOO ANNOUNCES NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

For Immediate Release  
November 27, 2013

On behalf of the YWCA Board of Directors, Chair Wendy Van Peenan announced that Grace Lubwama of Los Angeles, California, will become the new Chief Executive Officer of the YWCA of Kalamazoo.

Ms. Lubwama, a native of Uganda, brings a broad global perspective to her experience with public health, organizational leadership, and community development. Her global perspective also infuses her strong public advocacy approach to issues of social justice and community transformation.

Most recently, she has been both the Regional Executive Director for Southern California and the National Director of Community Advocacy with World Vision, US, headquartered in Seattle, Washington. In those capacities she worked to improve the well-being of children and youth through programs of direct service and advocacy.

Prior to World Vision, she served as the Executive Director of Antelope Valley Partners for Health (AVPH) in Antelope Valley, California. AVPH is a public health planning and intervention organization that provides services to children and adults without access to health care. In her first 18 months with AVPH, she grew the operating budget from \$100,000 to \$3 million, and she oversaw the development of the area's first community clinic that now serves more than 5,000 uninsured individuals, annually.

"Grace is a seasoned executive with a record of building and invigorating organizational teams to achieve strong and mission-driven goals," said Ms. Van Peenan. "The YWCA Board is excited about being able to bring Grace's leadership not only to the YWCA but also to the broader community."

Pat Coles-Chalmers, Co-Chair of the Search Committee, agreed. "Grace is a transformational leader. She will excite the entire community about the YWCA mission of eliminating racism and empowering women, and she will create ways through which the citizens and institutions of Kalamazoo can all work together to make social change."

Ms. Lubwama received her BA in Fine Arts and Industrial Design from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, her Masters in Public Health (MPH) in International Health from Boston University in Boston, MA, and is completing her PhD in Policy, Planning and Development from the University of Southern California. She speaks five languages: Luganda, English, French, Spanish and Swedish.

She believes that systems, policies and laws that create and sustain social injustice must be evaluated, understood and changed. "I hope that the YWCA can lead the community in creating a more socially just and equitable future for all its citizens, especially the most vulnerable," she said.

Her husband and two young sons will accompany her to Kalamazoo. She will begin working at the YWCA in February.

#### **About the YWCA of Kalamazoo**

The YWCA of the USA, of which the YWCA of Kalamazoo is a member Association, is the oldest, largest autonomous women's membership organization in the world. YWCA Kalamazoo is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. The YWCA of Kalamazoo, the oldest Association in Michigan, was founded in 1885 and began as a residence service provider to young women who gravitated to the city to work in its factories. Today, the YWCA provides the only shelter, crisis intervention services and an array of post crisis shelter supportive housing

options specifically designed and operating for victims of domestic violence and their dependent children; the only services of our kind for adult sexual assault survivors, including medical forensic exams in a non-hospital setting, supportive volunteers and counseling; one of very few licensed and nationally accredited child care centers that both offers tuition assistance and accepts government subsidies; and services to the community-at-large, focusing on racial justice.

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