

# Companies, organizations take a stand against racism

Written by Chris Swingle  
Apr. 29, 2011

About 100 local companies and organizations are holding Stand Against Racism events today, the first time the effort has happened in Rochester.

"The goal of the event is to recognize and celebrate the progress we have had on race, but to recognize there's more work to be done," said Jean Carroll, president and chief executive officer of the YWCA in Rochester. "There are some people in our community who, I think, believe we're already there. We're not."

People who don't live near people of color may not be aware of the problems, she said.

"We really do exist in many ways as two communities," she said.

The solution to racism, she said, is people realizing what they can do as individuals. The Stand Against Racism grew out of a 2007 program by two YWCAs in New Jersey to get people from different walks of life together to discuss common concerns and how to improve the quality of life in their communities.

It turned into a national effort that included a quarter-million people in 2010.

Rather than one big event, various things are happening throughout the day across the Rochester area to reach children and adults. Some are for people within a certain business or group, while others are open to the public. Some churches are holding events over the weekend. Among public events today:

- 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.: "Why Diversity?" The University of Rochester's second annual Diversity Conference, Hoyt Hall Auditorium on the river campus. Includes 9:15 a.m. keynote address by Daryl G. Smith, professor education and psychology at Claremont Graduate University and author of *Diversity's Promise for Higher Education: Making it Work*.
- Noon: Friends of the Rochester Public Library hosts Jean Carroll for a program and book discussion in Kate Gleason Auditorium, 115 South Ave.
- 2 to 4 p.m.: First Genesis Baptist Church, 292 Hudson Ave., hosts a facilitated discussion by YWCA staff titled Opening Doors.
- 6 to 9 p.m.: YWCA Young Professionals of Rochester host an open-microphone night for poetry, short stories and acoustic music at Equal=Grounds Coffee House, 750 South Ave.
- 7 to 7:45 p.m.: Barnes & Noble Booksellers store at The Mall at Greece Ridge, 330 Greece Ridge Center Drive, Greece, will hold a pajama story time for preschool and elementary children focused on books celebrating diversity.

For a full list of events, go to [www.standagainstracism.org](http://www.standagainstracism.org).