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Since 2003, the Rhonda Walker Foundation has empowered teen girls from our community through a proven five-year “Girls Into Women” program, which focuses on academic preparation, career development, mentoring, personal health, financial literacy, self-esteem, community service and more. And even with all of the challenges presented during 2020, the Foundation’s leadership wants the community to know that nothing has changed in relation to the nonprofit’s commitment and effectiveness.

“When the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools our team went to work to ensure that the girls in our program had the tools necessary to transition to online learning as well as pivoted to virtual programming that stressed the importance of mental health, goal setting and overall well-being,” said Ruselda Johnson, CEO of the Rhonda Walker Foundation.

“Our mission to empower teen girls is even more pivotal during these challenging times when youth are disheartened and discouraged with the changes in school structure and the loss of critical rites of passage such as graduations and proms. Moments such as our Scholar Power Parade, where we caravanned throughout metro Detroit to deliver scholarship checks to our graduating seniors, ensure our girls



Empowering teen girls remains first and foremost for the

Rhonda Walker Foundation

know they are appreciated and that their accomplishments are worth recognizing.”

Long before she obtained most of her professional accolades, and long before she obtained her iconic status as a fixture in Detroit’s morning news scene, Rhonda Walker had a vision of connecting girls from our community with positive role models. Needless to say the vision has materialized in a most positive way, as the Rhonda Walker Foundation proudly reports a 100 percent college enrollment rate and nearly 100 percent college graduation rate among teens that have completed the five-year (eighth to 12th grade) “Girls Into Women” program.

The Foundation’s impressive track record has earned the respect of community partners including MGM Grand Detroit, which will be supporting the Rhonda Walker Foundation on #GivingTuesday. And as December 1 approaches, the Foundation leadership says the #GivingTuesday support will be put to excellent use.

“Community support for organizations that empower our youth is more important now than ever,” said Johnson, who like the entire Rhonda Walker Foundation family--staff, board members and volunteers--share the founder’s passion for uplifting Detroit youth. Johnson added: “The potential for young people to fall behind or give up on school

completely increases every day. Young people are disconnected from the normal flow of adolescence and organizations. The Rhonda Walker Foundation helps to ensure they are able to make positive and relevant connections with their peers and caring adults outside of the day-to-day online learning, which can sometimes create a feeling of isolation.”

Johnson’s sentiment is shared by Airiana Louie-Cameron, a graduate of Dakota High School and the Rhonda Walker Foundation’s “Girls Into Women” program, class of 2020.

“Because of the Rhonda Walker Foundation, I am now a person who is going after my goals for the right reasons; taking care of myself and figuring out what is the best thing for me,” said Louie-Cameron, who will be continuing her education at Eastern Michigan University. “I would like to thank every single person I have encountered in the program because I finally like who I am, and I can see a future for myself. If I could change one thing about the program I wouldn’t, because the program truly is what the goal is: ‘To better young girls to become strong, powerful, empowering young women in the world.’”

MGM Grand Detroit encourages our community to learn more about the Rhonda Walker Foundation. For additional information, please visit rhondawalkerfoundation.org.

