



FOOD *for* THOUGHT

Spring 2021



Lucy K. Hayden, PhD: educator, trailblazer, YMOW client

On the heels of Black History Month and in celebration of Women's History Month, YMOW is proud to play a small part in the inspiring life of Dr. Lucy K. Hayden.

Dr. Lucy K. Hayden has never been one to let things get in her way. As a young, black woman in the 1940s, Dr. Hayden didn't let Jim Crow era laws prevent her from earning a college degree. As she pursued her goals and dreams, Dr. Hayden forged new pathways, breaking gender and racial barriers throughout her career as a high school teacher and college professor.

So when a fall made her well-earned retirement a bit more difficult to manage, Dr. Hayden turned to Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels, proving that even trailblazers need a little help sometimes.

With her meals delivered to her door, Dr. Hayden could put her energy toward healing. Two years later, she is stronger, but she still enjoys and appreciates receiving meals twice a week.

"It gives me respite from having to prepare my meals every day," the 96-year-old said. With help from a neighbor who does her shopping, she continues to live comfortably in the home she has loved for more than 30 years.

Like so many YMOW clients, Dr. Hayden treasures her ability to age at home. Even the pandemic hasn't kept her from engaging with her fellow Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated Sorors – an organization to which she has belonged for 75 years. She learned to attend meetings via Zoom and forged new friendships through YMOW's friendly caller program.

"There's an independence that I enjoy being at home," said Dr. Hayden. There's no doubt that drive for independence also existed when she earned

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New YMOW office manager has a passion for food equity

YMOW's new office manager, Keegen Carty Meranuck, literally learned of YMOW's impact on the community from the ground up.

While working at Frog Holler Farm, Keegen became aware of Food Gatherers, and in turn, the produce that is donated to Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels each week.

"I'm a big believer in everyone having access to nutritious food," said Keegen, who became a delivery volunteer in late 2020. When the office manager position opened up just months later, he didn't waste a moment.

"This is definitely right in my wheelhouse," said Keegen, who holds a degree in business management, with a focus in human resources. He said he hopes to use his knowledge and experience to help YMOW offer food and support to more of his Ypsilanti neighbors.

Keegen steps into the role long held by Carey Miller, who recently left YMOW to spend time caring for her family. As the point person between YMOW and the people served, Keegen said he looks



forward to getting to know each and every client and doing what he can to meet their needs.

"It's really impactful work to know that we may be someone's only contact with outside people," Keegen said. "We can be a light in someone's life by doing something as simple as dropping off a meal."

Keegen enjoys theater, yoga, being outdoors, gardening and his two cats, Mowgli and Lola.

Lucy K. Hayden, PhD

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her degree from Kentucky State College in 1946, when she became the first African American teacher at the then prestigious Highland Park High School in the 1950s, and when she earned her doctorate in English Language and Literature from the University of Michigan in 1972.

In 2016 Dr. Hayden was reminded of her impact as an educator when she was chosen as guest speaker at the reunion of the Highland Park High School class of 1966. Dr. Hayden taught at several colleges throughout the country before ending her career at Eastern Michigan University in 2001 – just a few miles from where she lives today, and where she plans to stay, thanks in part to Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels.

Want to go paperless?

If you would prefer to receive *Food for Thought* via email, please send a note to sandy@ymow.org

Start your week off right!

Mondays are busy days at Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels, and we could use a little help! If you have a couple of hours to spare at the start of the week, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Jessica Cichowlas at volunteer@ymow.org or visit ymow.org/volunteer for more information.



Expanded menu means more options for YMOW clients

If variety truly is the spice of life, things just became much more interesting for the clients of Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. Working with the culinary geniuses at Michigan Medicine, YMOW has expanded its menu to include additional vegetarian options and some extra special desserts.

“The expansion of our vegetarian menu is part of a focus by YMOW to address the special dietary needs of our clients,” said Alison Foreman, executive director of Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels.



Along with vegetarian dishes like two-bean tamale pie and vegetable frittata, YMOW is marking holidays such as Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and even National Banana Bread Day with something extra sweet.

Even more choices are coming in March as YMOW prepares to launch a pilot program of medically-friendly meals. Freshly prepared, frozen meals will be made available to select clients with renal, cardiac and diabetic needs.

“This is a big step in YMOW’s approach to food as medicine,” said Bethany Burge, director of clinical and community services. “We believe that by meeting these unique nutritional needs through specifically prepared meals, we can help

clients control their health and avoid hospitalizations and complications.”

Meals will be prepared by Trio Foods and delivered weekly to a select group of YMOW clients.

The initial four-month pilot is funded through the Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation and will be con-

ducted with Vital Seniors Network partners Area Agency on Aging 1-B, Chelsea Senior Center, Jewish Family Services, Catholic Social Services and the Center for Health and Research Transformation.

Pilot expansion is funded through Feeding America, in partnership with Food Gatherers and Jewish Family Services.

Pi(e) & a Pint is back!

YMOW is teaming up with Ypsilanti Food Co-op and local musician Steve Somers to create a safe, fun and delicious way to enjoy YMOW’s Pi(e) & a Pint tradition this year.

Support your homebound neighbors March 12-14 with the purchase of a slice of pie and a cool beverage from Ypsilanti Food Co-op. \$5 from every \$10 Pi(e) & a Pint comes back to Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. That’s one hot meal purchased for every slice of pie!

Sweet, savory, vegan and gluten-free options, along with whole pies (\$20), will be available. Beverages will include selections from 734 Brewing Company and Unity Vibrations.

Then, join us at 3:14 p.m. on Sunday, March 14, for a free virtual happy hour featuring live music by Steve Somers and Friends, streamed live via Facebook.

A full menu and pre-order form are available at ymow.org/pie. Orders can be picked up between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Friday – Sunday, March 12 - 14 at Ypsi Food Co-op, 312 North River Street, Ypsilanti.



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Food for Thought is published by Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels. For comments or questions, contact Sandy Bosch at sandy@ymow.org, or 734-217-4578.

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Did you know?

YMOW's efforts to protect clients from COVID-19 began one year ago. Today, we continue to practice safe, socially distanced delivery to more people than ever before.

As people took steps to shelter in place, demand for YMOW's support increased throughout the Ypsilanti community. We continue to meet those needs with the support of donors and volunteers like you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Our Mission

To provide nutritious meals and social contact for the homebound elderly, ill and disabled in eastern Washtenaw County, enabling them to live healthier, safer and more independent lives.

Our Vision:

A community where every senior feels nourished, valued and supported.

Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels
1110 West Cross St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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Save the date

YMOW is combining our two signature fundraisers – Meals on Heels and the Holiday Home Tour – into one fabulous event this year!

Join us for a fun, festive evening of 1920s glamour to support Ypsilanti's homebound neighbors at Meals on Heels: A Gatsby Holiday on Saturday, December 4.

We hope to hold an in-person event at the Firehouse Museum, complete with Gatsby attire, music, food and drink, but will host virtually if needed.

Help us make this event a success by becoming a sponsor or in-kind donor!

Sponsorships are available at all levels. Email Sally at giving@ymow.org for details.

Stay tuned for more details! We hope to see you there!



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