

YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago Records 732012.YOMCR.OLKM

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

University of Illinois at Chicago, Special Collections and
University Archives Department at the Richard J. Daley Library
July 3, 2012

Table of Contents

<u>Summary Information</u>	3
<u>Historical Note</u>	4
<u>Scope and Content Note</u>	4
<u>Administrative Information</u>	5
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u>	5
<u>Cited Sources</u>	6
<u>Collection Inventory</u>	7
<u>Series I: Administrative Office Files</u>	7
<u>Series III: Publications</u>	57
<u>Series IV: Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs</u>	60

Summary Information

Repository	University of Illinois at Chicago, Special Collections and University Archives Department at the Richard J. Daley Library
Title	YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago Records
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1941-1960
Date [inclusive]	1876-2001
Extent	29.4 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago was founded in 1876. At the time, the city was rebuilding from the Great Fire of 1871 and growing numbers of young single women were coming to Chicago looking for work. The YWCA provided services to these women including safe housing, religious and vocational instruction, and efforts to improve labor conditions. The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago records contain administrative records, publications, newsletters, promotional literature, scrapbooks, news clippings, and photographic negatives and prints generated by or relating to the organization.</p>

Historical Note

The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago was founded in 1876, following the establishment of women's Christian associations in New York and Boston. At the time, Chicago was rebuilding from the Great Fire of 1871 and growing numbers of young single women were coming to the city looking for work. The YWCA provided services to these women including safe housing, religious and vocational instruction, and efforts to improve labor conditions.

The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago started providing living quarters for single women in 1877. By the 1890s the YWCA featured a library, auditorium, gymnasium, and 180 rooms for female residency. An employment bureau brought courses in typing and sales, two occupations then considered exclusive to men. By the 1920s, the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago provided rooms in four residences to house up to 10,000 women. The Harriet Hammond McCormick YWCA opened in the late 1920s and featured a swimming pool and beauty parlor. The YWCA also owned and operated a summer camp on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan.

As the YWCA's infrastructure adapted to the needs of young women, so did its policies regarding faith and race. At first only white Christian women who were members of Evangelical congregations were allowed to join, and up to 1934 the organization required a pledge to Christianity. In 1912, the YWCA began to assist African American girls, but only then by referring them to African American women. Still, the YWCA would in time prove to be ahead of the nation in promoting racial equality and integration. Its services and board of directors were racially integrated in the 1940s.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the YWCA's services shifted further from a focus on moral welfare to broader goals of social justice. New programs included early childhood services and counseling for survivors of rape and domestic violence. In 1969, Doris Vivian Wilson became the first African American Executive Director for Chicago and steered the organization toward promotion and advocacy of the Women's Movement. The 1970s also saw a decline in resources. Residences were closed and sold, ending the YWCA's direct involvement in providing room and board for women. In 1989 the YWCA sold its Forest Beach summer camp on Lake Michigan.

Today, the YWCA focuses on women's economic empowerment, support for survivors of sexual violence, and early childhood service. Racial justice remains an essential component of the organization's work.

Scope and Content Note

The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago records (1876-2000) document the birth and growth over more than a century of the women's empowerment organization in the Chicago area. The collection is arranged into

four series: “Administrative Office Files,” “Reports,” “Publications,” and “Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs.” The material is generally arranged in chronological order within each subseries; in cases where subseries do not exist, the material is arranged in chronological order within the series. The YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago records provide an inside view of the growth and development of the women’s empowerment organization in Chicago, including the YWCA’s efforts to improve gender and racial equality throughout society. Researchers interested in the YWCA, women’s organizations in general, and 20th-century social justice efforts may find this collection valuable.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

University of Illinois at Chicago, Special Collections and University Archives Department at the Richard J. Daley Library July 3, 2012

Processing Information note

Processed by CLIR funded Black Metropolis Research Consortium "Color Curtain Processing Project." By Olle Larson and Kristin Moo. July 3, 2012.

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Chicago
- Feminism
- Forest Beach Camp
- Labor
- Religious Education
- Women
- Women's Movement
- Women-Societies and clubs
- World War II

Cited Sources

“Local History,” YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, accessed September 9, 2012, <http://www.ywca.org/site/pp.asp?c=euLRI7OZH&b=172155>.

Knupfer, Anne Meis. “Young Women’s Christian Association,” The Encyclopedia of Chicago, accessed September 9, 2012, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1394.html>.

Series I: Administrative Office Files,

Collection Inventory

Series I: Administrative Office Files, 1939-1960

Scope and Contents note

“Administrative Office Files” includes materials related to the administration of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago. It is divided into eleven subseries: “Board of Directors and Board of Trustees;” “Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences;” “Program Planning; Public Affairs;” “Public Relations;” “Staff;” “General Administration;” “Membership;” “National Board;” “Organizations;” and “War Services.” Each subseries is generally arranged in chronological order. Materials include correspondence, meeting minutes and agendas, committee reports, research materials, staff directories, and promotional matter.

Subseries A: Board of Directors and Board of Trustees, 1941-1960

Scope and Contents note

This subseries includes meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, and research material from the YMCA’s Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, and their subcommittees.

	Box	Folder
General, 1941-1942	1	1
General, 1942-1943	1	2
Nominating Committee, 1943-1944	1	3

Subseries A:Board of Directors and Board of Trustees,

General, 1943-1944	1	4
Meetings, 1944-1945	1	5
Board of Directors, Nominating Committee for Officers of the Board, 1944-1945	1	6
Board of Directors, Nominating Committee, 1944-1945	1	7
Board of Trustees, 1944-1945	1	8
Board of Directors, Meetings, 1945-1946	1	9
Board of Directors, Nominating Committee, 1945-1946	1	10
Board of Directors, Nominating Committee for Officers of the Board, 1945-1946	1	11
Board of Directors, Evanston Branch and All Other Centers, 1945-1946	1	12
Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, Meetings, 1946-1947	1	13
Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, Finance Department Minutes and Meeting Notes covering the Reconstruction Campaign, 1946-1947	1	14
Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, Finance Department Correspondence concerning Reconstruction Campaign, 1946-1947	1	15

Subseries A:Board of Directors and Board of Trustees,

Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, Finance Department Form Letters, Mimeo. work in connection with Reconstruction Campaign, 1946-1947	1	16
Nominating Committee, 1946-1947	2	17
Meetings, 1947-1948	2	18
Business Committee and Department, 1947-1948	2	19
By-Laws Committee, 1947-1948	2	20
By-Laws Committee, 1947-1948	2	21
Nominating Committee, 1947-1847	2	22
Business Committee and Department, 1948-1949	2	23
By-Laws Committee, 1948-1949	2	24
General, 1948-1949	2	25
Meetings, 1948-1949	3	26
Nominating Committee, 1948-1949	3	27
Meetings, 1949-1950	3	28

Subseries A:Board of Directors and Board of Trustees,

Building Committee, 1949-1950	3	29
Business Committee and Department, 1949-1950	3	30
By-Laws Committee, 1949-1950	3	31
Nominating Committee, 1949-1950	3	32
Meetings, 1950-1950	3	33
Recommendations for J. Ainsworth, 1950-1951	3	34
Business Committee and Department, 1950-1951	3	35
Mrs. Butler Honor Scholarship Fund, 1950-1951	3	36
Nominating Committee, 1 of 2, 1950-1951	3	37
Nominating Committee, 2 of 2, 1950-1951	3	38
Business Committee and Department, 1951-1952	4	39
Meetings, 1951-1952	4	40
Nominating Committee, 1951-1952	4	41
Business Committee and Department, 1952-1953	4	42

Subseries A:Board of Directors and Board of Trustees,

General, 1952-1953	4	43
Nominating Committee, 1 of 2, 1952-1953	4	44
Nominating Committee, 2 of 2, 1952-1953	4	45
Business Committee and Department, 1953-1954	4	46
Citizens Advisory Committee, 1953-1954	4	47
General, 1953-1954	4	48
Nominating Committee, 1953-1954	4	49
Development, Chicago Heights, Homewood, etc, 1953-1954	4	50
Business Committee and Department, 1954-1955	4	51
General, 1954-1955	4	52
Nominating Committee, 1954-1955	4	53
Business Committee and Department, 1955-1956	5	54
General, 1955-1956	5	55
Nominating Committee, 1955-1956	5	56

Subseries A:Board of Directors and Board of Trustees,

Nominating Committee (Past), 1 of 2, 1955-1956	5	57
Nominating Committee (Past), 2 of 2, 1955-1956	5	58
Business Committee and Department, 1956-1957	5	59
Business Committee and Department, 1957-1958	5	60
General, 1957-1958	5	61
Nominating Committee, 1957-1958	5	62
Council on Associated Development, 1958-1959	5	63
Business Committee and Department, 1958-1959	5	64
General, 1958-1959	5	65
Nominating Committee, 1958-1959	5	66
Development Division, 1959-1960	5	67
Business Committee and Department, 1959-1960	5	68
Nominating Committee, 1959-1960	5	69
Miss Barnes, Sparker at Sunday Evening Club, 1959-1960	5	70

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,**Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences, 1939-1960****Scope and Contents note**

This subseries includes materials pertaining to the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago's camps, centers, departments, and residences, including correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes, research materials, and promotional matter.

	Box	Folder
Department—Health Education, 1934-1939	6	71
Camp—Girl Reserve, 1937	6	72
Residence—McCormick, 1939	6	73
Camp—Girl Reserve, 1939-1940	6	74
Department—Industrial, Committee on Household Employment, 1940-1941	6	75
Camp—Girl Reserve, 1941-1942	6	76
Department—Health Education, Douglas Smith Fund, 1941-1942	6	77
Department—Industrial, Committee on Household Employment, 1941-1942	6	78
Camp—Girl Reserve, 1942-1943	6	79

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Department—Business and Professional, 1942-1943	6	80
Center—Loop, 1942-1943	6	81
Department—Heath Education, 1942-1943	6	82
Department—Industrial, 1942-1943	6	83
Department—Services, 1943-1944	6	84
Center—Evanston Branch, By-Laws, 1943-1944	6	85
Center—Evanston Branch, General, 1943-1944	6	86
Department—Services, 1943-1944	6	87
Center—Evanston Branch, 1944-1945	6	88
Centers—General, 1944-1945	6	89
Center—Loop, Location Committee, 1945-1946	6	90
Residence—McCormick, 1945-1946	6	91
Residence—West Side, 1945-1946	6	92
Center—Evanston Branch, 1946-1947	7	93

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Departments—General, 1946-1947	7	94
Residence—McCormick, 1946-1947	7	95
Residence—McCormick, 1947-1948	7	96
Camps—Committee, 1948	7	97
Residence—McCormick, 1948-1949	7	98
Residence—McCormick, 1949-1950	7	99
Center—Loop, 1950-1951	7	100
Department—Student, 1950-1951	7	101
Residence—McCormick, 1950-1951	7	102
Camp—Committee and General, 1951-1952	7	103
Center—Ashland, 1951-1952	7	104
Center—South Parkway, 1951-1952	7	105
Department—Industrial, 1951-1952	7	106
Department—Service, 1951-1952	7	107

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Center—McCormick, 1951-1952	7	108
Camps—Committee and General, 1952-1953	7	109
Center—Ashland, 1952-1953	7	110
Center—Loop, 1952-1953	8	111
Center—South Parkway, 1952-1953	8	112
Center—West Side, 1952-1953	8	113
Department—Health Education, 1952-1953	8	114
Department—Personal Services, 1952-1953	8	115
Department—Student, 1952-1953	8	116
Department—Young Adult, 1952-1953	8	117
Department—Y-Teen, 1952-1953	8	118
Residence—General, 1952-1953	8	119
Residence—McCormick, 1952-1953	8	120

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

West Side Residence—General West Side Residence— General, 1952-1953	8	121
Camp—Committee and General, 1953-1954	8	122
Center—Ashland, 1953-1954	9	123
Center—Loop, 1953-1954	9	124
Center—South Parkway, 1953-1954	9	125
Center—West Side, 1953-1954	9	126
Center—Woodlawn, 1953-1954	9	127
Department—Health Education, 1953-1954	9	128
Department—Personal Services, 1953-1954	9	129
Department—Student, 1953-1954	9	130
Department—Young Adult, 1953-1954	9	131
Department—Y-Teen, 1953-1954	9	132
Residences—General, 1953-1954	9	133

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Residence—McCormick, 1953-1954	9	134
Residence—West Side, 1953-1954	9	135
Camp—Committee and General, 1954-1955	9	136
Center—Ashland, 1954-1955	9	137
Center—Loop, 1954-1955	10	138
Center—South Parkway, 1954-1955	10	139
Center—West Side, 1954-1955	10	140
Center—Woodlawn, 1954-1955	10	141
Departments—Health Education, 1954-1955	10	142
General Information and Medical Policies, 1954-1955	10	143
Department—Personal Services, 1954-1955	10	144
Department—Student, 1954-1955	10	145
Department—Young Adult, 1954-1955	10	146
Department—Y-Teen, 1954-1955	10	147

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Residence—McCormick, 1954-1955	10	148
Residence—West Side, 1954-1955	10	149
Camp—General, 1955-1956	11	150
Center—Ashland, 1955-1956	11	151
Center—Loop, 1955-1956	11	152
Center—South Parkway, 1955-1956	11	153
Center—West Side, 1955-1956	11	154
Center—Woodlawn, 1955-1956	11	155
Department—Personal Services, 1955-1956	11	156
Department—Student, 1955-1956	11	157
Department—Young Adult, 1955-1956	11	158
Department—Y-Teen, 1955-1956	11	159
Residence—McCormick, 1955-1956	11	160
Residence—West Side, 1955-1956	12	161

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Camp—General, 1956-1957	12	162
Center—Ashland, 1956-1957	12	163
Center—Loop, 1956-1957	12	164
Centers—South Parkway, 1956-1957	12	165
Centers—West Side, 1956-1957	12	166
Centers—Woodlawn, 1956-1957	12	167
Department—Personal Services, 1956-1957	12	168
Department—Student, 1956-1957	12	169
Department—Teen Age and Young Adult, 1956-1957	12	170
Residence—McCormick, 1956-1957	12	171
Residence—West Side, 1956-1957	12	172
Camp—General, 1957-1958	12	173
Center—Loop, 1957-1958	12	174
Center and Residence—McCormick, 1957-1958	12	175

Subseries B: Camps, Centers, Departments, and Residences,

Center and Residence—South Parkway, 1957-1958	12	176
Center and Residence—West Side, 1957-1958	13	177
Center and Residence—Woodlawn, 1957-1958	13	178
Departments—Personal Services, 1957-1958	13	179
Departments—Student, 1957-1958	13	180
Departments—Teen Age and Young Adult, 1957-1958	13	181
Camp—Forest Beach Camp General, 1958-1959	13	182
Center—Loop, 1958-1959	13	183
Center and Residence—McCormick, 1958-1959	13	184
Center—South Parkway, 1958-1959	13	185
Center—West Side, 1958-1959	13	186
Center—Woodlawn, 1958-1959	13	187
Departments—Teen Age and Young Adult, 1958-1959	13	188
Department—U.S.O, 1958-1959	13	189

Subseries C: Program Planning,

Residences—Living in Scholarships, 1958-1959	13	190
Camp—Forest Beach Camp, 1959-1960	13	191
Center—Loop, 1959-1960	13	192
Center and Residence—McCormick, 1959-1960	13	193
Center—South Parkway, 1959-1960	14	194
Center—West Side, 1959-1960	14	195
Center—Woodlawn, 1959-1960	14	196
Department—Health Education, Report by Mrs. Mills, 1959-1960	14	197
Department—Personal Services, 1959-1960	14	198
Department—Student, 1959-1960	14	199
Departments—Teen Age and Young Adult, 1959-1960	14	200
Department—U.S.O, 1959-1960	14	201
Residences—Re. Living In Scholarships, 1959-1960	14	202

Subseries C: Program Planning, 1942-1946

Subseries D: Public Affairs,**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries contains materials pertaining to program planning for the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

	Box	Folder
General,	14	203-206
General,	15	207-213
General,	16	214-221

Subseries D: Public Affairs, 1942-1960**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries contains materials related to the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago's of public affairs department.

	Box	Folder
General, 1942-1944	16	222-223
General, 1945-1956	17	224-233
General, 1956-1960	18	234-237

Subseries E: Public Relations, 1941-1960**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries E: Public Relations,

This subseries contains promotional and fundraising for the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, including correspondence, flyers, and reports.

	Box	Folder
Publicity, 1943-1944	18	238
Finance, 1947-1948	18	239
Finance, 1949-1950	18	240
Publicity, 1949-1950	18	241
Finance, 1950-1951	18	242
Publicity, 1950-1951	18	243
Finance, 1952-1953	18	244
Finance, 1953-1954	18	246
Publicity, 1952-1953	18	245
Publicity, 1953-1954	18	247
Fund Raising, 1954-1955	19	248
Publicity, 1954-1955	19	249

Subseries F: Staff,

Fund Raising, 1955-1956	19	250
Publicity, 1955-1956	19	251
Fund Raising, 1956-1957	19	252
Publicity, 1956-1957	19	253
Fund Raising, 1957-1958	19	254
Publicity, 1957-1958	19	255
Fund Raising, 1958-1959	19	256
Publicity, 1958-1959	19	257
Fund Raising, 1 of 2, 1959-1960	19	258
Fund Raising, 2 of 2, 1959-1960	19	259
Publicity, 1959-1960	20	260

Subseries F: Staff, 1941-1960**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries includes directories, meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, and biographical information regarding executive and professional staff for YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

Subseries F: Staff,

	Box	Folder
City-Wide Staff Meetings, 1942-1943	20	261
City-Wide Home Addresses, 1942-1943	20	262
City-Wide Executive Staff, 1942-1943	20	263
City-Wide Professional Staff, 1942-1943	20	264
City-Wide Program Committee, 1942-1943	20	265
City-Wide Executive Staff, 1942-1943	20	266
Staff Meetings, 1943-1944	20	267
Home Addresses, 1943-1944	20	268
Professional Staff, 1943-1944	20	269
Program Committee, 1943-1944	20	270
City-Wide Executive Staff, 1944-1945	20	271
City-Wide Executive Staff, 1945-1946	20	272
Professional and Executive Staff, 1946-1947	20	273

Subseries F: Staff,

Executive Staff, 1947-1948	20	274
Executive Staff, 1948-1949	20	275
Executive Staff, 1949-1950	20	276
Professional Staff, 1949-1950	21	277
Executive Staff, 1950-1951	21	278
Professional Staff, 1950-1951	21	279
Executive Staff, 1951-1952	21	280
Professional Staff, 1951-1952	21	281
Executive Staff, 1952-1953	21	282
Professional Staff, 1952-1953	21	283
Executive Staff, 1953-1954	21	284
Professional Staff, 1953-1954	21	285
Executive Staff, 1954-1955	21	286
Professional Staff, 1954-1955	21	287

Subseries G: General Administration,

Executive Staff, 1955-1956	21	288
Professional Staff, 1955-1956	21	289
Party for Miss Fullbrook, 1956, July	21	290
Executive Staff, 1956-1957	21	291
Professional Staff, 1956-1957	21	292
Executive Staff, 1957-1958	21	293
Professional Staff, 1957-1958	21	294
Executive Staff, 1958-1959	21	295
Professional and Clerical Staff, 1958-1959	21	296
Executive Staff, 1959-1960	21	297
Professional Staff, 1959-1960	21	298

Subseries G: General Administration, 1941-1960**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries includes general meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, and research materials of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

Subseries G: General Administration,

	Box	Folder
Conference and Convention Committee, 1942-1943	22	299
Correspondence, 1942-1943	22	300
Statistics, 1942-1943	22	301
Miss Venable, Personal Dues, 1942-1943	22	302
Residence Directors, 1943-1944	22	303
Correspondence, 1943-1944	22	304
Correspondence, Miss Barnes, 1944-1945	22	
Correspondence, Miss Maguire, 1944-1945	22	
Committee to Study Interracial Practices in Community YWCAs, 1944-1945	22	308
Interracial Policies Summary, 1944-1945	22	309
Interracial Study Report, 1944-1945	22	310
Program Emphases and Objectives, Total Association, 1944-1945	22	311
Residence Directors, 1944-1945	22	312

Subseries H: Membership,

Correspondence, Miss Barnes, 1945-1946	22	313
Residence Directors, 1945-1946	22	314
Statistics, 1948-1949	23	315
Correspondence, 1950-1951	23	316
Correspondence, Mrs. Harold C. Coffman, 1950-1951	23	317
Correspondence, Mrs. Hattie Droll, 1950-1951	23	318
Committee Appointments, Rental of Space, 1952-1953	23	319
Correspondence, K.A. Rouse, 1953-1954	23	320
Correspondence, 1956-1957	23	321
Correspondence, 1959-1960	23	322

Subseries H: Membership, 1941-1960**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries includes lists and meeting agendas and minutes pertaining to the membership and volunteers for the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

Box **Folder**

Subseries H: Membership,

Annual meeting, 1941-1942	23	323
Membership, 1942-1943	23	324
Annual Meeting, 1942-1943	23	325
Annual Meeting, 1943-1944	23	326
Annual Meeting, 1944-1945	23	327
Annual Meeting, 1945-1946	23	328
Annual Meeting, 1946-1947	23	329
Annual Meeting, 1947-1948	23	330
General, 1947-1948	23	331
Annual Meeting, 1948-1949	24	332
Annual Meeting, 1949-1950	24	333
Annual Meeting, 1950-1951	24	334
Volunteers, 1950-1951	24	335
Annual Meeting, 1951-1952	24	336

Subseries H: Membership,

Volunteers, 1951-1952	24	337
Annual Meeting, 1952-1953	24	338
Meetings, 1952-1953	24	339
Annual Meeting, 1953-1954	24	340
Meetings, 1953-1954	24	341
Annual Meeting, 1954-1955	24	342
Centennial Celebration, 1954-1955	25	343
General, 1954-1955	25	344
Annual Meeting, 1955-1956	25	345
General, 1955-1956	25	346
Annual Meeting, 1956-1957	25	347
General, 1956-1957	25	348
Annual Meeting, 1957-1958	25	349
General, 1957-1958	25	350

Subseries I: National Board,

Annual Meeting, 1958-1959	26	351
General, 1958-1959	26	352
Annual meeting, 1959-1960	26	353
General, 1959-1960	26	354
Subseries I: National Board, 1942-1960		
Scope and Contents note		
This subseries features materials documenting the interaction of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago with the organization's national board of directors and regional office. Included are personnel materials, meeting agendas and minutes, and conference proceedings.		
	Box	Folder
General, 1942-1943	26	355
Retirement Fund, 1942-1943	26	356
War Funds, 1942-1943	26	357
Questionnaires, 1943-1944	26	358
Regional Conference, 1944	26	359
General, 1944-1945	26	360

Subseries I: National Board,

Minutes, 1944-1945	26	361
Retirement Fund, 1944-1945	26	362
General, 1945-1946	26	363
Other YWCAs, 1945-1946	26	364
Retirement Fund, 1945-1946	26	365
Convention, 1946	27	366
General, 1946-1947	27	367
Overseas Reconstruction Fund Campaign, 1946-1947	27	368
General, 1947-1948	27	369
National Interests and Support, 1947-1948	27	370
Retirement Fund, 1947-1948	27	371
Personnel Matters, 1947-1948	27	372
Central Regional Conference, 1948	27	373
Big Cities Conference, 1948-1949	27	374

Subseries I: National Board,

National Convention, 1948-1949	27	375
General, 1948-1949	27	376
National Interests and Support, 1948-1949	27	377
General, 1 of 2, 1949-1950	28	378
General, 2 of 2, 1949-1950	28	379
National Interests and Support, 1949-1950	28	380
Other YWCAs, 1949-1950	28	381
Personnel Matters, 1949-1950	28	382
Regional Office, 1949-1950	28	383
Retirement Fund, 1949-1950	28	384
General, 1950-1951	28	385
National Interests and Support, 1950-1951	28	386
Other YWCAs, 1950-1951	28	387
Personal Matters, 1950-1951	28	388

Subseries I: National Board,

Regional Conference, 1 of 2, 1950-1951	29	389
Regional Conference, 2 of 2, 1950-1951	29	390
Regional Office, 1950-1951	29	391
Retirement Fund, 1950-1951	29	392
General, 1951-1952	29	393
National Convention, 1951-1952	29	394
Convention Preparation, 1951-1952	29	395
National Interests and Support, 1951-1952	29	396
Regional Office, 1951-1952	29	397
Other YWCAs, 1951-1952	29	398
Personnel Matters, 1951-1952	29	399
Retirement Fund, 1951-1952	29	400
General, 1952-1953	30	
National Interests and Support, 1952-1953	30	402

Subseries I: National Board,

Other YWCAs, 1952-1953	30	403
Personnel Material, 1952-1953	30	404
Regional Office, 1952-1953	30	405
Retirement Fund, 1952-1953	30	406
General, 1953-1954	30	407
General, 1953-1954	30	408
National Interests and Support, 1953-1954	30	409
Other YWCAs, 1953-1954	30	410
Personnel Material, 1953-1954	30	411
Regional Office, 1953-1954	30	412
Regional Conference, 1953-1954	30	413
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan 1953-1954	31	
Convention, 1954-1955	31	415
General, 1954-1955	31	416

Subseries I: National Board,

National Interest and Support, 1954-1955	31	417
Other YWCAs, 1954-1955	31	418
Personnel Material, 1954-1955	31	419
Regional Office, 1954-1955	31	420
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan, 1954-1955	31	421
General, 1 of 2, 1955-1956	31	422
General, 2 of 2, 1955-1956	31	423
National Interests and Support, 1955-1956	31	424
Other YWCAs, 1955-1956	31	425
Personnel Material, 1955-1956	31	426
Regional Office, 1955-1956	32	427
Retirement Fund, Saving and Security Plan, 1955-1956	32	428
General, 1956-1957	32	429
National Interests and Support, 1956-1957	32	430

Subseries I: National Board,

Other YWCAs, 1956-1957	32	431
Personnel Material, 1956-1957	32	432
Regional Conference, 1956-1957	32	433
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan, 1956-1957	32	434
National Convention, St. Louis, 1957-1958	32	435
General, 1957-1958	32	436
National Interests and Support, 1957-1958	32	437
Other YWCAs, 1957-1958	32	438
Personnel Material, 1957-1958	32	439
Regional Office, 1957-1958	32	440
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan, 1957-1958	33	441
General, 1958-1959	33	442
National Interests and Support, 1958-1959	33	443
Other YWCAs, 1958-1959	33	444

Series II: Reports, 1876-2000

Personnel Material, 1958-1959	33	445
Regional Office, 1958-1959	33	446
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan, 1958-1959	33	447
General, 1959-1960	33	448
National Interests and Support, 1959-1960	33	449
Other YWCAs, 1959-1960	33	450
Personnel Material, 1959-1960	33	451
Regional Conference, 1959-1960	33	452
Retirement Fund, Savings and Security Plan, 1959-1960	33	453

Series II: Reports, 1876-2000**Scope and Contents note**

The series "Reports" includes the compiled records of committee and board meetings of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, internal reports, and published annual reports and national convention proceedings. It is divided into four subseries: "Minutes and Reports," "Internal Reports," "Annual Reports," and "National Conventions."

Subseries A: Minutes and Reports, 1876-1959

Subseries A: Minutes and Reports, 1876-1959**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries consists of minutes and reports (many handwritten) documenting committee and board meetings for the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

	Box	Folder
Women's Christian Association of Chicago Minutes, 1876-1882	43	547
Women's Christian Association of Chicago Minutes, 1882-1887	43	548
YWCA Minutes, 1887-1893	43	549
YWCA Minutes, 1893-1894	44	550
YWCA Minutes, 1901-1906	44	551
YWCA Minutes, 1906-1910	44	552
YWCA Minutes, 1911-1915	45	553
YWCA Minutes, 1915-1919	45	554
YWCA Minutes and Committee Reports, 1919	45	555
YWCA Minutes, 1920	46	556
YWCA Minutes, 1921	46	557
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1922	46	558

Subseries A: Minutes and Reports, 1876-1959

YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1923	46	559
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1924	46	560
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1925	47	561
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1926	47	562
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1927	47	563
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1928	47	564
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1929	47	565
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1930	47	566
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1931	48	567
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1932	48	568
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1933	48	569
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1934	48	570
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1935	48	571
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1936	48	572

Subseries A: Minutes and Reports, 1876-1959

YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1937	49	573
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1938	49	574
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1939	49	575
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1940	49	576
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1941	49	577
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1942	50	578
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1943	50	579
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1944	50	580
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1945	50	581
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1946	50	582
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1947	50	583
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1948	51	584
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1949-1950	51	585
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1950-1951	51	586

Subseries B: Internal Reports, 1929-1962

YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1951-1952	51	587
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1953	51	588
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1954	51	589
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1955	52	590
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1956	52	591
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1957	52	593
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1958	52	593
Executive Committee Minutes, 1958-1959	52	594
YWCA Minutes and Reports, 1959	53	595
Membership Meetings, 1931-1939	53	596
Membership Meetings, 1940-1946	53	579
Membership Meetings, 1947-1956	53	598

Subseries B: Internal Reports, 1929-1962**Scope and Contents note**

Subseries B: Internal Reports, 1929-1962

This subseries contains internal research material, data, and completed studies created or compiled by the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

	Box	Folder
McGill Residence Study, undated	53	599
YMCA and YMCA Historical Data, 1929-1942	53	600
Y.M.C.A, Report Women's Work, 1931-1940	53	601
Y.M.C.A, Report Women's Work, 1942-1943	53	602
A Century of Progress, Report and Pamphlets, 1933-1936	53	603
Central Residence, Closing, 1934-1940	54	604
Program Planning Study, 1 of 1, 1937-1938	54	605
Program Planning Study, 2 of 2, 1937-1938	54	606
Internal Reports, Race Relations, 1937-1943	54	606
Reports and Records, 1939	54	608
Finance Report, Reconstruction Find, 1946-1947	54	609
West Side Residence Building Report, 1951-1955	54	610

Subseries C: Annual Reports, 1876-2000

Industrial Women's Leisure-Time Study, 1952	55	611
McCormick Center Policies and Procedures, 1952-1953	55	612
Citizens Advisory Committee, 1954	55	613
Citizens Advisory Committee, 1954-1955	55	614
General Survey, 1956	56	615
Building Report, 1956	56	616
Professional Staff Manual, 1962	56	617
Subseries C: Annual Reports, 1876-2000		
Scope and Contents note		
This subseries consists of published annual reports of the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago.		
	Box	Folder
Annual Reports, 1878-1895	57	618
Annual Reports, 1895-1907	57	619
Annual Report, Cover, 1895-1907	57	620
Annual Reports, 1895-1907	58	621

Subseries C: Annual Reports, 1876-2000

Annual Reports, 1896-1910	58	622
Annual Reports, 1908-1928	58	623
Annual Reports, 1911-1928	58	624
Department Annual Reports, 1921-1939	59	625
Department Annual Reports, 1932-1939	59	626
Annual Reports, 1958-1959	59	627
Annual Reports, 1959-1966	59	628
Annual Reports, 1993-2000	59	629
Annual Reports, 1994	59	630
Annual Reports, 1995	59	631
Annual Reports, 1996	59	632
Annual Reports, 1997	59	633
Annual Reports, 1998	59	634
Annual Reports, 1999	59	635

Subseries D: National Conventions, 1922-1958

Annual Reports, 2000	59	636
Subseries D: National Conventions, 1922-1958		
Scope and Contents note		
This subseries consists of published reports documenting the proceedings of YWCA national conventions.		
	Box	Folder
Proceedings and Reports, 1922-1926	60	637
Proceedings and Reports, 1928-1930	60	638
Proceedings and Reports, 1930-1932	60	639
Proceedings and Reports, 1934-1936	60	640
Proceedings and Reports, 1938	60	641
Proceedings and Reports, 1 of 2, 1938-1940	61	642
Proceedings and Reports, 2 of 2, 1938-1940	61	643
Proceedings and Reports, 1946-1952	61	644
Proceedings and Reports, 1952-1959	61	645

Subseries J: Organizations,

Proceedings and Reports, 1955-1958	62	646
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Proceedings and Reports, 1958	62	647
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Subseries J: Organizations, 1941-1960**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries contains correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes, correspondence, and research material pertaining to organizations affiliated with the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, including the Community Fund and the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago.

	Box	Folder
Community Fund 1941-1942	33	454
Community Fund 1942-1943	33	455
Community and War Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc. 1942-1943	33	456
Community Fund 1943-1944	34	457
Council of Social Agencies, Division on Education and Recreation 1943-1944	34	458
Community Fund 1944-1945	34	459
Community Fund 1945-1946	34	460

Subseries J: Organizations,

Council of Social Agencies, Division on Education and Recreation 1946-1947	34	461
Community Fund, Service Report 1946-1947	34	462
Community Fund 1947-1948	34	463
Council of Social Agencies 1947-1948	34	464
General 1947-1948	34	465
Community Fund 1948-1949	34	466
Council of Social Agencies, Newsletter 1948-1949	34	467
Community Fund 1949-1950	34	468
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Board of Directors 1949-1950	34	469
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1949-1950	35	470
U.S.O. Chicago Associated Services Committee 1950-1951	35	471
Community Fund 1950-1951	35	472
General 1950-1951	35	473

Subseries J: Organizations,

National Conference of Social Work 1950-1951	35	474
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 1 of 2 1950-1951	35	475
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 2 of 2 1950-1951	35	476
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1950-1951	35	477
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Board of Directors 1950-1951	35	478
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1950-1951	35	479
Community Fund 1951-1952	36	480
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1951-1952	36	481
Community Fund 1952-1953	36	482
General 1952-1953	36	483
National Association of Professional Workers 1952-1953	36	484
National Conference of Social Work 1952-1953	36	485

Subseries J: Organizations,

Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Board of Directors 1952-1953	36	486
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 1 of 2 1952-1953	36	487
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 2 of 2 1952-1953	36	488
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1952-1953	36	489
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1952-1953	37	490
U.S.O. 1952-1953	37	491
Chicago Housing Authority 1953-1954	37	492
U.S.O. 1953-1954	37	493
General 1953-1954	37	494
Community Fund 1953-1954	37	495
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1953-1954	37	496
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1953-1954	37	497

Subseries J: Organizations,

Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1953-1954	37	498
National Association of Professional Workers 1953-1954	37	499
National Conference of Social Work 1953-1954	37	500
Community Fund 1954-1955	38	501
General, 1 of 2 1954-1955	38	502
General, 2 of 2 1954-1955	38	503
U.S.O. 1954-1955	38	504
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1954-1955	38	505
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 1 of 2 1954-1955	38	506
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation, 2 of 2 1954-1955	38	507
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1954-1955	38	508
Community Fund 1955-1956	38	509

Subseries J: Organizations,

General 1955-1956	39	510
National Conference of Social Work 1955-1956	39	511
U.S.O. 1955-1956	39	512
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1955-1956	39	513
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1955-1956	39	514
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1955-1956	39	515
Community Fund 1956-1957	39	516
U.S.O. 1956-1957	39	517
General 1956-1957	39	518
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1956-1957	40	519
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1956-1957	40	520
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1956-1957	40	521

Subseries J: Organizations,

Community Fund 1957-1958	40	522
General 1957-1958	40	523
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1957-1958	40	524
General 1957-1958	41	525
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1957-1958	41	526
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1958-1959	41	527
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1958-1959	41	528
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1958-1959	41	529
General 1958-1959	41	530
Community Fund 1958-1959	41	531
Community Fund 1959-1960	41	532
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, American Camping Association 1959-1960	42	533

Subseries K: War Services,

Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Division of Education and Recreation 1959-1960	42	534
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, General 1959-1960	42	535
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Planning for Services Committee. 1959-1960	42	536
Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, Public Relations Council 1959-1960	42	537

Subseries K: War Services, 1942-1947**Scope and Contents note**

This subseries consists primarily of materials documenting the common efforts of the U.S.O and the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago during World War II.

	Box	Folder
U.S.O., 1941	42	538
U.S.O., 1941-1942	42	539
Social Protection Committee, Office of Civilian Defense (OCD), 1942	42	540
Coordinating Committee, 1942-1943	42	541
U.S.O., 1942-1943	42	542

Series III: Publications,

U.S.O, 131 South Wabash Ave., 1942-1943	43	543
U.S.O., 1943-1944	43	544
Coordinating Committee, 1943-1944	43	545
U.S.O., 1946-1947	43	546
Series III: Publications, 1890-2001		
Scope and Contents note		
This series consists of published material created by the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago, including newsletters, brochures, and privately published books.		
	Box	Folder
A Book of Tested Recipes, 1890	62	648
In Memoriam Elizabeth McCormick, 1905	62	649
W Magazine, 1923-1940	62	650
Dedication of Harriet Hammond McCormick Memorial, 1928	63	651
The Tower of Babel, 1938-1948	63	652
Program Materials, 1952-1955	64	653

Series III: Publications,

Newsletters, 1968-1973	64	654
Newsletters, 1969	65	
Newsletters and Pamphlets, 1969-1971	65	656
Newsletters, 1970	65	657
Pamphlets, circa 1970	65	658
Press Packet and Promotional Materials, 1971-1974	65	659
Newsletters, 1972-1979	65	660
Program Materials, 1973	65	661
Newsletters, 1974-1975	65	662
Newsletters and Flyers for Radio Program, 1974-1978	65	663
Newsletters, 1975-1976	65	664
Newsletter, 1975-1978	65	665
Newsletters, South Suburban Area, 1977-1980	65	666
Clippings and Program Materials, 1977-1989	65	667

Series III: Publications,

Press Releases, 1979-1980	65	668
Newsletters and Program Materials, 1983	65	669
Pamphlets, circa 1990-2000	65	670
Pamphlets, Rape Crisis Hotline, 2000	65	671
Voices Newsletters, 1990	66	672
Voices Newsletters, 1991	66	673
News Ys, 1991	66	674
Voices Newsletters, 1992	66	675
News Ys, 1992	66	676
Voices Newsletters, 1993	66	677
News Ys, 1993	66	678
Voices Newsletters, 1993-2000	66	679
Voices Newsletters, 1994	66	680
Voices Newsletters, 1995	66	681

Series IV: Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs,

Voices Newsletters, 1996	66	682
Voices Newsletters, 1997	66	683
Voices Newsletters, 1998	66	684
Voices Newsletters, 1999	66	685
Voices Newsletters, 2000	66	686
Voices Newsletters, 2001	66	687

Series IV: Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs, 1876-2000**Scope and Contents note**

This series consists of scrapbooks documenting camper activities at the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago's Forest Beach Camp ("The Splash"), including photographs, news clippings, and notes. Also in this series is a collection of prints from tinted glass slides as well as the slides themselves in oversized boxes.

	Box	Folder
Scrapbook, The Splash (unfolded), 1916-1920	66	688
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1927	67	689
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1929	67	690

Series IV: Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs,

Scrapbook, The Splash, 1931	67	691
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1931	68	692
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1935	68	693
	Bin	Folder
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1936	68	694
	Box	Folder
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1937	68	695
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1939	69	696
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1939-1940	69	697
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1941	69	698
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1942	70	699
Scrapbook, The Splash, 1947	70	700
Scrapbook, The Splash, undated	70	701
YMCA College Commencement Program, 1925	70	702
Press Packet, 2000	70	703

Series IV: Scrapbooks, Clippings, and Photographs,

Scrapbook, Clippings, 1950-1952	71	704
Prints from tinted glass slides, 1 of 3, 1876-1965	71	705
Prints from tinted glass slides, 2 of 3, 1876-1965	71	706
Prints from tinted glass slides, 3 of 3, 1876-1965	71	707