



TEEN EMPOWERMENT OPENING SPARKS JOY

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The shiny blue ribbon meant to symbolize the opening of Teen Empowerment's new headquarters on Genesee Street wasn't quite long enough for all of those who showed up. By the time every single current and former youth organizer made their way to the stage for a ribbon cutting ceremony, they ran out of gold scissors.

It didn't matter. The joy in the courtyard was electrifying.

The nonprofit's reach spans two decades, hundreds of youth across several generations, and three city neighborhoods. And with the opening of a new \$4.3 million Barack and Michelle Obama Teen Empowerment Center facility in the 19th Ward, Teen Empowerment now has a home that finally reflects its bold past and hopeful future in Rochester.



Ashley Saint-Hilaire, Jerrard Brown and Kenya Joseph, all with Teen Empowerment, get help from Dshawna Dupree Singleton of Christa Construction in putting a ribbon on the front door of the new Barack and Michelle Obama Teen Empowerment Center.

Saint-Hilaire and Joseph are with the Teen Empowerment Boston organization while Brown is the office and facilities manager for the Rochester organization. PHOTOS BY TINA MACINTYRE-YEE/ROCHESTER AND CHRONICLE

Top: Skyler Johnson, with the Northside Teen Empowerment Center, views in 3-D the Clarissa Street project that was done a couple years ago by a Teen Empowerment cohort.