



*July 2016*

## MISSION GRANT STORY

### **ROSA YOUNG ACADEMIES & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS \$25,000**

Rosa J. Young was born in 1890 to ordinary black/African American parents. However, she did not let her race define her. She let her Christian faith define who she was, and so her Lutheran faith is the center of her legacy. She was instrumental in the founding and development of 30 Lutheran elementary schools and 35 Lutheran congregations throughout Alabama. With funding from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), she ultimately started what is today Concordia College, located in Selma, Alabama.

By God's grace in Jesus Christ, the pioneer outreach led by Rosa Young brought many people into the Lutheran Church during the last century, and many of the students entered pastoral and teaching ministries. The number of African-Americans in the LCMS has been declining steadily in the last generation necessitating worthy models of Christian ministry and vocation to inspire young people to embrace church careers.

The Rosa J. Young (RJY) Academies & After School Programs Initiative is collaborating with existing congregations that have recently closed their schools to create new academies and after

school tutorial/mentoring and spiritual growth programs to enhance children and families educationally and spiritually. The collaboration also extends to struggling schools to help them become effective and productive schools. In urban and rural communities where no LCMS school exists, the intent is to start new schools and after school programs for the purpose of founding new mission congregations.

A desired outcome is to inspire revitalization of congregations in Black Ministry as the Holy Spirit through the means of grace makes new believers from these academies and after school tutorial and mentoring opportunities within the LCMS.

The Rosa Young Initiative will provide children with a safe environment for education and spiritual growth; supply the opportunity to worship together and grow in the Word of God; witness to one another of God's love, mercy and grace; encourage participation in positive life-changing spiritual and character building programs; offer healthy nutritious meals and teach healthy eating habits; and counsel in learning healthy life skills using arts, drama/plays, sports and other programs to encourage healthy living habits.