GRATITUDE REPORT

2020

Honoring Our Resilient Community
Dear YWCA Hartford Region Family and Friends,

**Resilient.**

That word keeps coming to mind when we think about this past year.

A worldwide pandemic kept us in our homes and behind masks. A movement for racial justice grew out of violent necessity. We – the YWCA and the world – were tested.

But we learned we could meet big challenges and overcome them, with your help.

Because of you, we were able to adapt. And now, we’re even more committed to racial justice and gender equity. We must be.

Your support for YWCA Greater Hartford Region meant progress, even during chaotic times. We learned we could deliver many programs virtually. That meant we were able to provide critical services to people who needed us more than ever.

With your help, we kept our Early Learning Centers open – especially for important healthcare workers. You allowed us to move from in-person to virtual work, while we continued to support women working to stay in college.

You stepped up for high school girls who didn’t skip a beat as they kept their college goals in sight. And together, we won passage of The CROWN Act, which prohibits race-based hair discrimination.

Change is growth. And thanks to you, we are growing. We’re revising our strategic plan to better serve this community. And with the extraordinary gift from MacKenzie Scott we can do even more for women, girls and families.

But here’s what we want you to know: your generosity and your concern for women and girls mattered. You mattered. Thank you for all you do to empower women and eliminate racism. We’re honored to have you at our side in this work!

**Jaleith Zakiya Gary**  
*Board Chair*

**Adrienne W. Cochrane**  
*Chief Executive Officer*
Because of generous support like yours, some of our Early Learning Centers stayed open throughout the crisis.

Childcare is where family problems collide. Work, family, education. Economic inequity, racial inequity, gender inequity. Working mothers need to know their children are safe. So we were determined to keep our centers open and safe for children.

Attentive, safe and nurturing care prepares today’s little ones to be tomorrow’s citizens. But too often, the quality of care depends on income or geography. The children who need nurturing care the most are the least likely to have access.

You helped change that.

Your commitment to women and children is so important – and never more than during the last year. For every child with a brighter future, thank you!
WHO declares coronavirus a pandemic. A wave of lockdowns begin in the U.S.

YWCA announces its decision to postpone the annual In the Company of Women event, planned for April 9, to September 9 out of abundance of caution.

YWCA joins legislative and labor leaders in support of The CROWN ACT. The proposed bill ends discrimination for all women and men who have been subjected to workplace and societal pain simply because of hair texture or hair style. The bill was introduced in 2020 and became law during the 2021 Legislative Session.

Breonna Taylor is killed at the hands of police in Louisville, Kentucky.

YWCA closes its offices to the public; staff begins working remotely.
PROJECT 26
Healthcare workers were urgently needed. You helped.

YWCA Hartford Region was proud to collaborate in Project 26. This project was launched by the state’s Office of Early Childhood and funded with a generous gift from Dalio Philanthropies. During the tense early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, select childcare centers across the state stayed open to ensure that frontline healthcare workers had childcare they could depend on.

Healthcare workers were critical to Connecticut’s public health emergency response. We were glad to be there to support them, thanks to you.

Project 26 has been a huge blessing to help make sure my kids’ educational needs are being met during this time. As an essential employee, having a safe place to send my children is necessary. The staff is amazing! Thanks again!

PROJECT 26 PARENT

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3/23
YW Career Women pivots to begin offering virtual 1:1 coaching to working mothers

4/23
YWCA hosts its first Facebook Live event during Stand Against Racism: Y Women Vote

4/7
YWLC holds its first virtual programming with young girls from Bloomfield High School

4/27
Coronavirus deaths in US surpass 1 million; worldwide 3 million
YOUR GENEROSITY...

Supported women and girls

Last year was about resilience. It was surviving a pandemic and still offering programming. Through a phone or device we were able to stay connected with our young girls and our women in school.

Our funding community pivoted and allowed for grace and flexibility. We could move away from meeting traditional benchmarks to being able to serve the needs of our participants where they were. We were able to stay connected with our program participants.

There was grief and death. And it was challenging to see the pain. But it also brought joy, because with you we were there to provide support to our women and girls through their transitions and challenges during this difficult year. Thank you for being there for them!

You empowered young women to dream big

Gatherings were virtual, but no less energetic. Throughout the year, girls from four local high schools came together with adult leaders to learn. From personal growth and leadership to financial literacy to career seminars and community service projects, YWLC members worked together and supported each other. And this year, 20 of the young women in this program have been accepted to college – from HBCU’s to UCONN.

5/21
Adrienne Cochrane hosts the first YWWLive Lunch and Learn with CT Family Leave CEO, Andrea Barton Reeves. Paid family leave has never been more relevant than during the pandemic

5/25
George Floyd is murdered at the hands of police in Minneapolis, MN, sparking protests against police brutality and racial injustice

5/5
Video of Ahmaud Arbery’s killing is leaked

5/27
YWCA’s “Community Matters” presents a Facebook Live event with prominent leaders discussing how to cope with the ongoing crises of the pandemic and racial injustice
WITH YOUR HELP...

I am the best me I can be!  

*By Lauren Samuels*

Growing up, I had to conform to what was considered to be the definition of beauty. I had to lose myself in order to be what society deemed socially acceptable, and because of that, it made me feel small.

I joined the Young Women’s Leadership Corps (YWLC) summer program; there I was surrounded by girls who looked like me. We were taught life skills like managing money, cooking, and how to conduct ourselves in a work environment. Still, for me, the program did more. I was no longer alone in a society designed to systemically oppress me. I could overcome any adversity I was presented with.

If it were not for the Young Women’s Leadership Corps and Ms. Uneeder, YWLC Senior Manager, I would never have become the black girl who is not afraid to stand up for what she believes, the black girl who is proud to be a black girl in every way, shape, and form. But most of all, someone who will never let anyone limit them or get in the way of my dreams because I will always aim for the moon but shoot for the stars. As Ms. Uneeder says, “I am going to be the best me that I can be, for no one can beat me, being me.”

6/3

YWCA joins members of the community, faith partners, and historically Black fraternities and sororities in a solidarity funeral procession to the state Capitol building to mourn the death of George Floyd and far too many Black and Brown women and men at the hands of police.

6/5

Former Vice President Joe Biden secures the Democratic nomination for President.

6/15

The U.S. Supreme Court rules employers cannot discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

YWCA HARTFORD REGION 2020 GRATITUDE REPORT
VOTING RIGHTS
Together we’ll fight until everyone’s rights are secure

2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing and protecting some women’s constitutional rights to vote. It was a hard won success for the women’s suffrage movement, but only gave white women the right to vote.

It took another 45 years for the Black and Brown community to win their right to vote. On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law, ending racial discrimination practices in voting. Fifty-five years ago, President Johnson was surrounded by Democrats and Republicans, as well as national leaders in the civil rights movement, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis and Rosa Parks, during the bill signing. The Voting Rights Act remains one of the most important pieces of legislation in our nation’s history. Voting rights continue to be attacked… so we’ll continue to stand up to protect every person’s right to vote. Today, we continue to uphold the right to vote and honor the generations of women and men who marched, sacrificed, and fought to ensure all citizens have their voice heard.

Our Community Engagement and Advocacy team works every day to not only encourage voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts, but helps raise awareness and inspires community members to take action on issues and create solutions that ensure racial justice and gender equity prevail.

7/3-7/31
YWCA promotes voter registration with multiple YWeVote programs and events

8/3
YWCA promotes a Get Out the Vote campaign at YWCA offices in Hartford; Secretary of the State Denise Merrill joins in encouraging residents to vote on primary and election days

8/6
55th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965
Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz joins Adrienne Cochrane as a guest on YWCA’s YW Live discussion
WHAT’S YOUR WHY?

Lynn inspires YW Career Women to reach their dreams

Over the past 15 months, Lynn Plummer has been an advocate and ally to the YWCA YW Career Women.

Lynn wanted to support women working to complete their college education and enter meaningful careers. Her philanthropy extends into thoughtful and timely conversations, book recommendations and drives, and sharing news clippings with staff and participants alike.

Lynn says, “I was given the opportunity to go to college, which helped me find a career that has enabled me to provide a home, food, and many of the nicer things in life for my family. By investing in impactful community work, my husband and support women and their children as they complete their higher education. We want to inspire and foster hope and help eliminate food and shelter insecurities. I feel connected to that purpose at the YWCA. And I’m proud I signed up for this mission and with these very dedicated people.”

Donors like Lynn make the YW Career Women program possible. You helped Isabel Almodovar (left) complete her nursing degree. You help stand up for girls and women. You care. Thank you!

8/14
YWLC Summer Institute participants, family and friends share a virtual celebration at the end of the five week program

8/11
Connecticut Primary Day; YWCA serves as a polling station for Hartford residents in voting district 9

8/18
100th Anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave only some women the right to vote

U.S. Senator Kamala Harris makes history as the first Black and Asian American woman to be nominated as a vice presidential candidate from a major party
A HISTORIC GIFT
We received a historic gift to support racial and gender equity

In 2020, YWCA Hartford Region received the largest individual gift in its more than 150 year history. MacKenzie Scott, author and philanthropist, donated $9 million dollars to support our work creating racial and gender equity in our community.

YWCA Hartford Region now has a greater opportunity to establish a creative and safe space for women, girls and families in the Harford community. Ms. Scott’s gift serves as a starting point from which to make the center a reality more quickly than we could have anticipated.

We are overwhelmed with gratitude by Ms. Scott’s support of our mission. Her commitment to racial and gender equity is in perfect alignment with the work we do every day to eliminate racism and empower women, girls and families.

ADRIENNE W. COCHRANE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

YWCA mourns the death of Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a trailblazer for gender equity
Throughout the month, YWCA conducts voter registration outreach to encourage voting in November elections

9/18
YWCA promotes Week Without Violence with multiple events and outreach

9/9
YWCA hosts In the Company of Women virtually, with keynote speaker and guest, Cecile Richards, national leader in women’s rights and co-founder of Supermajority

10/1-10/31
YWCA continues promoting Get Out the Vote efforts throughout the month

10/16-10/22
YWCA hosts "In the Company of Women" virtually, with keynote speaker and guest, Cecile Richards, national leader in women’s rights and co-founder of Supermajority

ADRIENNE W. COCHRANE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
YOU OPENED THE DOOR...
To a new home and a new future

A pandemic is no time to be without a place to live. Our shelter at Soromundi Commons was able to house 52 women throughout this difficult time.

Our women come in with nothing. The generosity of our donors helps us offer not just a place to live, but a program to help repair the trauma they’ve experienced. Education is part of every day, but they teach us as much as they learn.

LUCIANA DEGRAY, CLINICAL CASE MANAGER

Your care for women who find themselves in a tough place means so much. We’re very grateful.

MANY THANKS TO THE HEROES WHO MADE SURE OUR SOROMUNDI RESIDENTS WERE CARED FOR DURING THE PANDEMIC

During the most frightening moments of the pandemic, YWCA supporters gave of their hands and their hearts to keep our Soromundi Commons residents safe. Residents sent deliveries of food, blankets and personal hygiene products; and some donors provided handmade masks to help keep them safe. Thank you to all the generous people who reached beyond themselves to help women who truly needed them.

11/4-11/23
YWCA’s Community Engagement and Advocacy department conducts listening sessions to learn about important issues impacting residents in the community; results are used to form the 2021 legislative agenda

11/3 Election Day
Joe Biden is elected the 46th President of the United States; Kamala Harris elected as the first Black and Asian American woman to serve as Vice President; YWCA serves as a polling station for Hartford residents

12/11
The U.S. Federal Drug Administration issues its first emergency use authorization for the vaccine to prevent COVID-19; move allows the Pfizer vaccine to be distributed in the U.S.
The CROWN Act

The CROWN Act ensures protection against discrimination based on hairstyles by specifying that the protected class of race also includes traits historically associated with race identification, such as hair texture and hairstyles.

As a young woman of color, I felt pressured daily to change my identity. Allowing this discriminatory culture to prevail prohibits people of color, especially black women, from operating securely in who they are naturally.

Natural black hair is a gift given to us.

SHIAN EARLINGTON
YWLC ALUM

Get out the vote efforts worked. Even during a pandemic, a record number of registered voters in Connecticut – nearly 80% – voted. We saw the first woman, first Black woman, first Asian American woman, become Vice President.

And here in Connecticut, together we helped pass The CROWN Act.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, YWCA Hartford Region galvanized statewide support for The CROWN Act bill. The bill was introduced in 2020 before the session was cut short due to COVID-19. The bill was ultimately re-introduced in 2021, passed overwhelmingly in the House and Senate...and became law.

Shian Earlington, a YWLC alum, testifies before the Legislative Labor and Public Employees Committee in support of The CROWN Act. Shian is joined by Melinda Johnson, Director of Community Engagement and Advocacy.

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BY THE NUMBERS

EARLY LEARNING CENTERS

318 children, ages three months to five years old, attended pre-school to build a foundation for academic success and lifelong learning.

KIDS LINK

392 children had access to before and after-school programs in a safe, fun place to learn and grow while helping working parents.

SHELTER

52 women sought safety at the Emergency Shelter for Women.

SOROMUNDI COMMONS

30 adults secured permanent supportive housing in a safe space and received supportive wrap-around services.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN

1,100 people attended our first virtual event to support programs and services to help women, girls and families in the Hartford community.

YWCW

40 working mothers received academic and career counseling community with other women working toward college degrees and career growth.

YWLC

130 young girls, 13-18, participated in programs that emphasize leadership, advocacy, diversity and inclusion, self-empowerment, as well as explore college and career opportunities.
**FINANCIALS**

Fiscal Year 2020

**YWCA HARTFORD REGION REVENUES**

- Program Fees $1,541,526
- Governmental Grants $3,512,470
- Endowment Contributions $1,004,164
- Contributions & Special Events $10,403,913
- Non-governmental Grants $311,650
- United Way $227,000
- Miscellaneous Income $193,567

*Total Revenue $17,194,290

*Contributions include an unprecedented gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott

*Your generous gifts are absolutely critical to us. Thank you!

**YWCA HARTFORD REGION EXPENSES**

- Childcare Services $3,508,152
- Housing $618,941
- Women and Girls Programs $493,481
- Advocacy $1,025,872
- Community Facilities $238,895
- Fundraising and Marketing $659,818
- Management and General $912,658

Total Expenses $7,457,817

To see the full 2020 audited financials, visit www.ywcahartford.org
OUR DONORS

You’re more than a dreamer. You are remaking our community into a better, fairer place.

Your commitment to the values we share powers everything we do together. With your generosity, you are part of a movement that will change our world. You’re inspiring girls and women to reach higher, demanding a world free of racism. Your gifts are making change happen right now.

You are standing on the side of peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for us all.

And that… is powerful. Thank you!

Pamela Abbruzzese-Rose
Susan Ackerman
Arlene Acosta
Laurie Adams
Sarah Adanti
Jan Anderson
Anonymous (33)
Melissa Appley
Amanda Aronson
Shelly Aronson
Alok Arora
Kathleen Arsenault
Margaret Atherlay
Lindsay Aubin
Francine Austin
Korkoene (Kay) Awadzi
Diane Bak
Elizabeth Baker
Tatiana Banhon
Mary J. Barneby
Amy Barnes
Nancy C. Barnwell
Melissa Appley
Amanda Aronson
Shelly Aronson
Alok Arora
Kathleen Arsenault
Margaret Atherlay
Lindsay Aubin
Francine Austin
Korkoene (Kay) Awadzi
Diane Bak
Elizabeth Baker
Tatiana Banhon
Mary J. Barneby
Amy Barnes
Nancy C. Barnwell
Ashley Baron
Amy M. Barron
Nirupam Basu
Catharine Anne Bates
Cynthia J. Bates
Kate Baumann
Susan Beatty
Karen Bednarz
Nora Benanti
Brian Bennett
Lisa Bennett
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Jill Berquist
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Suzanne S. Bocchini
Marci Bohn
Leann Bohner
Fredrika Bookwater
Michael Booth
Maureen Boreland
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Daniel Bostic
Charmaine Bradshaw-Hill
Daniela C. Briggs
Wanda W. Broader
Karen Brown
Liz M. Buczynski
Lori M. Budnick
Nancy Bulkeley
Jamie Burns
Jennifer L. Burrill
Elizabeth Burton
Anne M. Burwood
Carlene D. Bush
Patricia Bushey
Beth Bye
Nicolle Byrne
Carolyn Bystrak
Eren Cagianello
Mary Cahalane
Arianna Calabrese
Kathy Callibey
Claudia Callender
Olga E. Callender
Lisa Cameron
Elizabeth Cantwell
Kaitlin A. Canty
Mary B. Cardin
Mary Beth Cardin
Samantha Carroll
Casey Carter
Kelly Carter
Elaine Cartland
Judy L. Casperson
Janet M. Castricum
Melanie J. Cecarelli
Diana Cesaro
Seshapani Chakka
Judith Chambers
Polly U. Champ
Alicia Charles
Tory Chavey
Evan Choquette
Karen Christiana
Patricia J. Christiana
Maureen Church
Jenn Cibrona
Leslie C. Clark
Lucy M. Clark
Lynne Clark
Adrienne W. Cochrane
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Jeanmarie H. Cooper
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Deborah Culliton
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Tobias Cushing
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Yvonne R. Davis
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Jill Drouin
Betty Dugan
Elizabeth H. Dugan
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Linda M. Estabrook
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Nakisha Farquharson
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Jevera Hennessey
Aleida Herzog
Michelle Hicks
Celeste Hite
Aimee L. Hoben
Geraldine Hogan
Angela M. Hudson-Davis
Dominique Hurst
You are dedicated to our community and to our shared vision of all we can be. Without your partnership, our work would not be possible. We are grateful for your continued support as we work together to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.
Thank You To Our 2020 Board of Directors

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Urban Alliance

Andrea Barton Reeves, Vice Chair
Connecticut Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority

Kristen Weisensee, Treasurer
Travelers, Inc.

Chasity Roberts, Secretary
United Healthcare, Inc.

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Welcome To Our 2021 Board of Directors

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Stacy Smith Walsh, Travelers, Inc.
Dantaya Williams, Raytheon Technologies
Yvette Young, The Village for Families and Children
YOUR YWCA HARTFORD REGION

Leadership Team

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Chief Executive Officer

Peggy Atherlay
Chief Development Officer

Leah Flanigan
Executive Assistant to the CEO and Board Liaison

Christina Gregoire
Director, Human Resources and Training

Melinda Johnson
Director, Community Engagement and Advocacy

Jill Marini
Director, Early Learning and School Age Programs

Maureen Sheridan
Chief Financial Officer

Donna Sodipo
Chief Program Officer

Catherine Zeiner
Chief Strategy and Operations Officer

Our Management and Support Staff

Robin Bucki, Early Learning Center Site Manager

Jordan Chase, Billing Specialist

Luciana DeGray, Housing Program Manager

Emely DeJesus, Housing Case Manager

Terry Fitzgerald, Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator

Tina Gladden, Assistant Director, Early Learning and School Age Programs

Karol Jimenez, Manager, Events and Fundraising

O’shaya Johnson, Program Coordinator, Women and Girl’s Program

Rhonda Knight, Early Learning Center Site Manager

Vanessa McQuillar, Customer Service Manager

Jennifer Mighty, Controller

Chantelle Norville, Housing Case Manager

Jodi Pugrab, Billing Specialist

Rosaline Rozario, Accounting Clerk

Uneeder Ruth, Senior Manager, Women and Girl’s Program

Dana Sears, Central Registration Coordinator

Jill Tiedt, Human Resource Benefits and Payroll Specialist

Lisa Toomey, Early Learning Center Site Manager

Lourdes Ufret, Early Learning Center Site Manager

Calvin Ware, IT Manager

THANK YOU

to our entire team of more than 80 dedicated teaching professionals. Our Early Learning Center teachers in Hartford, East Hartford, West Hartford and South Windsor; along with our Kidslink before and after-school childcare teams in Bolton, Rocky Hill and West Hartford who worked tirelessly throughout this difficult year to provide safe, fun, hands-on learning to kids throughout Greater Hartford. Thank you!
OUR VISION

Our vision is to become a community with unlimited opportunities to un-limit opportunity.

OUR MISSION

YWCA Hartford Region is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

YWCA Hartford Region
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Hartford, CT 06105
☎ 860.525.1163
☎ 860.543.8919

www.ywcahartford.org
#YWCAHARTFORD

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
Hartford Region