

Our Voice

Newsletter

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

Once In A Lifetime

The cover story of the September 2022 issue of Vogue magazine was about Serena Williams' decision to "evolve" from tennis to focus on expanding her family. Reshma Saujani, CEO of Girls Who Code, wrote an article for Romper regarding Williams' announcement entitled, "If Serena Williams Can't Have It All, Who Can?"

In this case, "having it all" implies not having to choose between career and family. We understand financial status distinguishes one's definitions of thriving versus "getting by." We use examples from Williams' experience in comparison to experiences of women we know, not to shame either way of life, but to expose the common thread between them.

After the birth of her daughter Olympia, stories about Williams' experience were released to highlight the maternal and infant death rate and risks among African American women. We may have asked ourselves a similar question then. "If Serena Williams can't have a smooth birthing experience, what Black woman can?"

We hear about and are inspired by celebrity stories chronicling their early struggles, the realization of their purpose and their daily grind toward achieving once-in-a-lifetime success and fame. Although the journeys of Serena Williams and a YWCA client may vastly differ, we have already identified similar bumps in the road: racism and sexism.

These barriers impact women and people of color regardless of socioeconomic status. Justice must be demanded at both sides of the scale. The difference lies in the access to resources for attaining it. When we focus on women and families with low or no income, we learn that it only takes once in their lifetime to hit a roadblock for their lives to turn upside down. Moreover, the revocation of reproductive rights, denied access to affordable childcare, and lack of equal pay for women only add to the list of areas that need reconstructed.

That's why YWCA is here: to help people as they navigate their way to a healthy, sustainable and equitable way of living. We not only envision a world of equity, we work to fulfill it. Associations across the country serve their communities by reaching people who are homeless, discriminated against or victims of violence. At YWCA Mahoning Valley, we address issues affecting women and people of color in our community. We are using Our Voice to break the silence on these issues.

Violence against women and people of color must stop. YWCA partners with Ohio Nonviolence Week, which is the first week of October, to raise awareness and educate people on how to live a life of nonviolence. The national Week Without Violence campaign, also in October, centers the needs of survivors of gender-based violence.

Racism is a Public Health Crisis. YWCA offers Emergency Rental Assistance for pregnant and new mothers to prevent risk of maternal and infant mortality in Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. Housing is a social determinant of health and homelessness negatively impacts the health of mother and child.

Women and those who can give birth should have bodily autonomy and access to reproductive care. Several types of health care fall under the umbrella of reproductive care, including abortion and period product justice. YWCA has held discussions on these topics, supported local rallies and signed on to letters to legislators regarding the Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade. To strip people of their right to make decisions in the best interest of their own health harms them and the communities they live in.

In every election season, it's Your Voice, Your Vote and Your Future. The Ohio voter registration deadline is October 11. Check your registration and get out the vote! Sign up to be a poll worker. Use your voice to make a choice.

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International Women's Day Celebrates Diversity and Culture

YWCA celebrated International Women's Day on March 10 after a two-year hiatus. Keynote Speaker Ana Torres reminded the audience of the contributions of women throughout history and the challenges they had to overcome. Attendees enjoyed a variety of foods that represented different nations. There were Irish, Indian and Colombian dance performances as well as an African American poetry reading. Interactive activities included Chinese lantern making and learning Turkish dance. The International Women's Day event was sponsored by the International Institute Fund of the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley.

International Women's Day Celebration

40 Years of Celebrating Women Artists

The Women Artists: A Celebration! show opened June 24 in person and online. Before the start of the show, juror and owner of the Bell Street Gallery, Jenn Crisan, joined members of the Women Artists Committee for a High Tea Judging event where she announced awards. More than \$3,500 in awards were distributed this year. Patrons and guests attended the Celebration Party on July 8 to witness the art, enjoy refreshments and live music from a featured artist, Diane Drapcho. There were two art series events during the show's run: A reading in partnership with Lit Youngstown in which poets read their poems based on pieces in the show, and a Paint & Sip with Mary Sinclair. Sponsors for the show were Edward M. Barr Charitable Trust, Barbara Brothers, Barbara Faires, Farmers Trust Bank, Elizabeth Ford, Leah Merritt, Nancy K. Morris Endowment Fund, Pollock Personal Foundation, Rick Shale, STIFEL, and York Mahoning. Funds received from the Women Artists exhibition benefit YWCA housing programs.



Artist Shaq Jones (L) and friends at the Women Artists Celebration Party



Y-Girls STEAM Ahead Campers

Summer STEAM Campers Study Musical Engineering

Thirty-three middle school girls attended Y-Girls STEAM Ahead camps in Warren and Youngstown this summer. Camp partners Oh Wow! Science Center, Mahoning Valley Manufacturing Coalition and Invent to Make assisted YWCA in planning STEM-focused activities for the girls. Campers explored musical engineering by utilizing different materials to design and build their very own working turntable/record player with the Summer Manufacturing Institute. Campers researched the existence of life on Mars and built a Mars rover. Other activities included 3D printing and arts projects such as tie-dying canvas bags and creating comics based on solving crimes.

Industry Experts Speak on How to Stand Against Racism

YWCA's Stand Against Racism campaign, held in April each year, explored new topics of the Stand Against Racism Challenge. Near the end of the online challenge, YWCA hosted a Stand Against racism event. The in-person discussion featured Dr. Nicolette Powe, Arthur Byrd, Heather Smith and Genna Petrolla, who spoke on the themes of Reproductive Justice, Film & Television, Critical Race Theory and Living Wage respectively. Other topics covered in our racial justice Lunch & Learn series included information on redistricting ahead of the special primary election with Kathleen Chaffee Gaige; a presentation on Indigenous rights and experiences on native land with Cynthia Conolly; and an informative voting webinar with Daniel Ortiz.



Dr. Nicolette Powe speaking about Reproductive Justice

Leave a Legacy

You can leave a lasting legacy for women and girls when you include YWCA Mahoning Valley in your will. For more information about planned giving, please contact Varada at 330-746-6361 ext. 112.

28th Young Women with Bright Futures Awards

Twenty-nine young women were recognized on March 19 at the Holiday Inn in Boardman for their outstanding scholastic and extra-curricular achievements. Allyson Crays, 2016 Bright Futures honoree and Youth Advisory Council Chair at PERIOD, was the keynote speaker for this year's event. Scholarships of \$20,000 were awarded through the Thomases Endowment Fund of the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation. Alyssa Ruggles of Austintown Fitch received the first place scholarship and Essay Contest Award. Lucia Wolford of McDonald High School won the second place scholarship. Each honoree also received a \$500 award sponsored by Denise DeBartolo York. Major sponsors were Akron Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley, Barbara Brothers, Boardman Rotary Club, Compco Industries, Denise DeBartolo York, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Fibus/Hendricks Family Foundation, State Farm, the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation.



In May, Cynthia Connolly of City Club of Cleveland spoke to us about how Indigenous/Native American history and culture being ignored does not mean that it does not exist. Indigenous lives and legacies will not be erased.



Emeritus Board Member Cheryl McArthur, President & CEO Leah Merritt, Judge Carla Baldwin, COO Varada Bhide and Development Assistant Jessica Gibbs at the Women's Equal Pay Day Event hosted by the Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club.



Children learn in YWCA Discovery Place Early Learning Center.

Wish Upon A Star

Each year, thanks to the caring donations of individuals and organizations, YWCA brings a smile to the faces of low-income and homeless children served through our programs.

You can help make a difference for a child this holiday season through our Wish Upon A Star project. Monetary contributions allow YWCA to purchase gifts for children in our programs. Gifts in any amount are appreciated by December 6 and can be directed to:

YWCA Mahoning Valley
25 W. Rayen Ave.
Youngstown, OH 44503

Call 330-746-6361 x 122 for Wish Lists or to make monetary donations.



Y's Women at New Location

This year's Y's Women: Power of the Purse fundraiser is Thursday, October 20 at 6 PM at Eastwood Event Centre. The event features a networking hour, hors d'oeuvres, testimonials and a silent auction.

Diane Sauer will be the keynote speaker and Megan Lee of WYTV will be the emcee. Lisa Resnick, Broker Owner of Dandelion Inc., joined the Y's Women Committee as Honorary Co-chair with Co-chairs Olympia Scott-Feagins and Stacy Quiñones. Major sponsors of Y's Women are Cafaro Foundation, KO Consulting LLC and Novogradac.

Women and men are welcome to attend. To RSVP, email Michaela at mwrite@mvywca.org

Limited Seating Available.

Barbara M. Wick Transitional House & Warren WINGS Wish List

- Laundry soap
- Bath soap
- Cleaning spray
- Light bulbs
- Stationery
- Envelopes
- Slippers
- Diapers of all sizes
- Cold medications
- Dish Cloths/Towels
- Pots/Pans/Dishes
- Forks/Knives/Spoons
- Dishwashing soap

Rental Space Available in Youngstown

YWCA is offering rental space for your next event, meeting or party.

- 1) The Youngstown Foundation Historic Lobby—up to 100 people
- 2) The Edward W. Powers Historic Gym & Community Room—up to 150 people

Both spaces have an attached kitchenette. Special rates for nonprofits available. Call 330-746-6361 x 122 for details.

YWCA is Hiring

Visit the **Careers** page under the **Who We Are** tab at ywcamahoningvalley.org to view open positions.

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25 W. Rayen Ave., Youngstown, OH 44503
Phone: 330-746-6361
ywcamahoningvalley.org

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U.S. Postage
PAID
Youngstown, OH
Permit No. 436

YWCA Discovery Place Youth Development


YWCA Mahoning Valley, 25 W. Rayen Ave., Youngstown


- Serving children ages 6 weeks to 5 years
- Open Monday—Friday 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM
- Nutritious meals and snacks included
- Special Needs inclusive
- ODJFS welcome
- STEAM Curriculum for preschoolers
- Up to 10% discount for employees working within 2-mile radius of YWCA
- Low ratios following pandemic protocols


Call 330-746-6361 ext. 126 for more childcare information.

YWCA Email List

YWCA e-blast offers news, updates and information about our upcoming programs. To subscribe visit ywcamahoningvalley.org or email Michaela Write at mwrite@mvywca.org

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Our Voice is published by YWCA Mahoning Valley. Comments and address changes to Communications Department at 330-746-6361 x 109.