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FALL 2017 • FREE

celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women

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volume 13, number 1

celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women
published by YWCA Rhode Island



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RIP Mollie 9/00-7/17. She was a good dog.

photo by Deborah L. Perry

contents. share it

3 awards presentation

13th Annual Awards Ceremony

12 women of achievement

LeeAnn Byrne
Chanda Womack
Alison Eichler
Henrietta Tonia White-Holder
Anne Grant
Vanessa Volz
Deloris Davis Grant
Elin Torell
Marta V. Martínez
Julie Nora
Pilar McCloud

23 organization of the year

NEARI Children's Fund Gingerbread Express

cover art

"Sally used to live here"



My dream job as a kid was to be a teacher. For as long as I can remember, I've enjoyed helping others find their way to an answer. I attended SUNY at Oneonta and graduated with a BS in elementary education and then thoroughly enjoyed teaching in Massachusetts, California and New York. After 5 years I decided to leave public school teaching and go back to college to pursue my other dream. I attended and graduated from The Art Institute of Boston with a BA in photography and found my new love. I managed a few jobs to start a children's portrait business called, Kids At Home. It was a documentary style approach to photographing children. At the time I also taught high school students black and white darkroom photography. Though I loved and still love teaching, I knew I had to take a break in order to further my own art career.

In 2005, I moved to Providence and made my first fine art collection of work using mixed media and photo-transfer. I used boards, xeroxed photographs, acrylic medium and paint to create 13 pieces that focused on images I created while traveling through Ireland and Italy. Using multiple processes to make a piece, created energy and I soon became obsessed with photo-transfers and mixed media. The backgrounds were painted and textured, while the foregrounds were of buildings and imagery that I collected in my travels.

Today my process of creating art has changed from those first pieces in 2005, but all of them still start with a photograph. My camera is like a pencil that sketches out the beginning of a new idea.

I now think of myself as more of a storyteller who travels to new places and rearranges landscape and architecture to create a new reality. These places are collected and saved until they are called upon to help tell a narrative. These new realities are then printed on ink jet film and transferred to paper or boards where they are altered some more using paint, ink, paper, pastel and/or wax.

My current work can be found on my website, in Craftland, Rhody Craft stores and on the walls at Chez Pascal restaurant in Providence. I have also returned a bit to my first dream job, teaching photo-transfer techniques at Lyra Art Studios in Olneyville.

Deb Hickey
www.debhickey.com

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

smile

YWCA highlights achievement

Congratulations to the 2017 YWCA Rhode Island Women of Achievement Award winners. Some are standing up for peace, some are standing up for justice, some are standing up for freedom, some are standing up for dignity, and all are making a positive difference in our state through actions that will be felt for generations.

This year's recipients are a diverse group including a humanitarian, public service director, scientist, educators, and nonprofit leaders. Congratulations to LeeAnn Byrne, Chanda Womack, Alison Eichler, Henrietta Tonia White-Holder, Anne Grant, Vanessa Volz, Deloris Davis Grant, Elin Torell, Marta V. Martínez, Julie Nora and Pilar McCloud.

We asked each of these women, "What was your dream job as a kid and has it manifested itself in what you do?" Their answers give us some insight into the paths they have chosen. Nominated by their peers, we celebrate these 11 amazing women who have blazed trails, suffered trials, broke ground, broke records and accomplished some tough stuff. We honor you, we thank you, and we celebrate the difference you are making in the world. :::::

Most sincerely,

Deborah

Deborah L. Perry, President/Chief Executive Officer
YWCA Rhode Island

trust it

how to:

contribute. *She Shines* welcomes letters to the editor, articles, poetry, stories, graphics, photos and calendar events. Contact us if you have an inspiring story to tell or have a suggestion of someone to be featured. Only original contributions will be considered and may be edited due to space limitations. Include contact information: name, e-mail, address and phone number. Images provided electronically must be high-resolution.

submit cover art. The cover is reserved as a gallery of art in keeping with the *She Shines* theme. For consideration, send in a photo by e-mail attachment or mail. This is a wonderful opportunity for local artists to show their work. A biography is published in conjunction with the "Artist Canvas" section of *She Shines*.

advertise. Visit sheshines.org to view the advertising media kit. *She Shines* reserves the right to refuse to sell space for any advertisement the staff deems inappropriate for the publication.

receive the magazine. *She Shines* is a free publication mailed to members and friends of YWCA Rhode Island. To be added to the mailing list, send in the subscription form - available online at sheshines.org. The magazine is also available at YWCA Rhode Island and at various special events.

honoring women of achievement

YWCA Rhode Island recognizes
women in industry, culture and public service

*event underwriters and attendees
thank you!*



Eleven women and an organization were recognized for their accomplishments promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity at the 13th Annual Women of Achievement Awards Luncheon, held November 14 at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln. Deb Ruggiero served as the event emcee.

Congratulations to the 2017 honorees. YWCA Rhode Island appreciates the underwriters and attendees celebrating the following Women of Achievement and Organization of the Year: LeeAnn Byrne, Chanda Womack, Alison Eichler, Henrietta Tonia White-Holder, Anne Grant, Vanessa Volz, Deloris Davis Grant, Elin Torell Marta V. Martinez, Julie Nora, Pilar McCloud and NEARI - Children's Fund Gingerbread Express.

Women of Achievement Awards are recognized nationally. They bring attention to the accomplishments of women in industry, culture and public service in local communities. For additional information, visit www.womenofachievementRI.org.

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"YWCA is pleased to host this celebration for the thirteenth year in a row to recognize the accomplishments of women across industry, culture and public service," says Deborah L. Perry, president/chief executive officer of YWCA Rhode Island. "The women we are honoring are nothing short of incredible. They are dedicated to their communities, to women and girls advancement and to making the world a better place. It's an honor for the YWCA to recognize them for their efforts."

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HENRIETTA T. WHITE-HOLDER
and all of the 2017
Women of Achievement!

*With love, respect and appreciation,
Rubén & Carrie Bridges Feliz*

Congratulations,
YWCA 2017 WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT



As a proud supporter of YWCA Rhode Island, we celebrate your accomplishments and thank you for making a difference and for inspiring future female leaders of industry and supporters of the arts and education. By working together, we strengthen community and build paths for generations of rising women.



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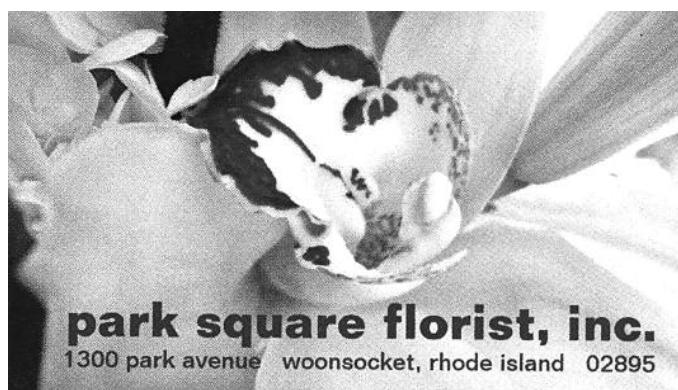
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Women of Achievement

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Pilar McCloud
Julie Nora
Elin Torell
Vanessa Volz
Henrietta Tonia White-Holder
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Organization of the Year

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LeeAnn Byrne is the legislative director at the Office of the General Treasurer Seth Magaziner, promoting the Office's initiatives to the Rhode Island General Assembly. Previously, she was the policy director at the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, where she successfully advocated for a dedicated funding stream for housing vouchers for people experiencing homelessness, the passage of the nation's first Homeless Bill of Rights, and the recent \$50 million Housing Opportunity Bond (Question 7). Byrne received her Masters in Social Work, with a focus on policy and administration, from Rhode Island College and her Bachelors in Social Work from Providence College.

photo by Agapao Productions

LeeAnn Byrne

When I was little, I dreamed of being a waitress when I grew up.

It is still unclear to me what inspired this – I do come from a long line of enthusiastic Irish and Italian eaters and drinkers. Food was central to our gatherings, and all the kids were expected to help out in the kitchen. My chores frequently included setting and clearing the dinner table. I was often underfoot in the kitchen, learning how to make sauce or macaroni and cheese or tuna salad. Even as a toddler, I would occupy myself for hours with measuring cups and Tupperware on the kitchen floor.

I also have vivid memories of practicing for my future career. On Thanksgiving at my grandparents' house on Cape Cod, family members played along, whether or not they were willing, when I staged elaborate games of "restaurant," using coasters as plates and taking orders on a pocket spiral notepad.

Strangely, I have never had a food service

job – despite many of my peers doing stints in waiting tables or bartending, I spent most summers in my youth working in a small non-profit. But I do see service as a cornerstone of my career – being in service to our vulnerable neighbors, and now in State service.

In social work school, I studied servant leadership, a philosophy that has guided my approach to my work – a focus on sharing power instead of acquiring power. For the nine years that I worked for the RI Coalition for the Homeless, I participated in building a movement for social and economic justice, in service to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. I feel very privileged in my role in Treasury to work for and with elected leaders who are using their power to address the needs of Rhode Islanders. And, I have been blessed with family, friends and mentors who have invested in my life, so I am conscious everyday of ways I can invest in others, to be of service. 



Woman of Achievement



Chanda Womack is the founding executive director of the Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE). ARISE's mission is to prepare, promote, and empower Rhode Island's Southeast Asian students for educational and career success. A well-known and charismatic community leader, Womack is a tireless advocate for equity and social justice. ARISE played a major role in the historical passage of the All Students Count Act in the Rhode Island House of Representatives. The legislation aims to "ensure data disaggregation among Asian students, which will allow for data transparency as it pertains to educational outcomes for Southeast Asian students, giving way to providing appropriate supports, services and interventions". She has over a decade of experience in serving underrepresented communities in college access and success. She also serves as the president of the Board for the Cambodian Society of RI, member of the Racial Justice Coalition and serves on the Inclusive Excellence Commission for Rhode Island College.

photo by Agapao Productions

Chanda Womack

“We have to do as the Americans!”

This was a statement that was constantly shouted around in my household growing up. We were refugees who had escaped a genocide that claimed over 2 million lives and my parents were in search of the “American Dream.” I was taught at a very young age that survival meant assimilation; assimilate is what we did even if it meant losing parts of what made us Cambodian.

I grew up having very little knowledge of Cambodian history, culture, customs, traditions and language. We were so immersed in survival mode that we forgot the importance of historical and cultural preservation. It is this search for my identity that led me to educational justice work.

I knew by the age of 10, I had to become a doctor or a lawyer, after all that was what my parents wanted and needed from me. They wanted the big house and the white picket fence.

As a fifth grader in 1992, I enrolled myself in a new academic, social support summer program called Providence Summerbridge. Providence Summerbridge

now known as Breakthrough Providence has a dual mission: to create a pathway to college for low-income, academically motivated middle school students and to encourage talented high school and college students to pursue careers in education. I could vividly remember the Executive Directors coming into the classroom and pitching the program. “Come learn about who you are and what you are capable of!” It was this exclamatory statement that gave me ammunition to apply. I still say, I was a guinea pig of the program because I was part of the first graduating cohort. I was committed to the program for 2 years and during that time I developed as a young leader with strong academic and social skills.

My parents were overjoyed, I needed to be strong academically if I was going to be lawyer or doctor. While I did not learn much about my Khmer culture, I did learn to embrace ME. I learned to value the differences in people, to cultivate and sustain meaningful relationships and to take on a proactive role when faced with adversity.

Breakthrough Providence builds and instills a culture of success that is unlike any other. The impact

was life changing for me as a student.

I started teaching at the summer program at the age of 15. I dedicated 4 consecutive summers to teaching Numeracy (Math.) I remember the unshakeable bonds and non-traditional experiential learning I was encapsulated in as a student and wanted to continue to be part of this infectious movement. I knew as a young educator, I wanted to dedicate my life to educational justice work. I wanted to infect change in the lives of those who were underserved, marginalized and disenfranchised.

At age 37, I have come to understand that the “American Dream” never existed for a family of refugees and education alone will not level the playing field. My parents’ true desire was not for me to become a prominent doctor or lawyer but to have a fulfilling life with unlimited access and opportunity. I am a descendent of WARRIORS, warriors who escaped mass annihilation. Resiliency is embedded in my DNA, to honor them I will continue to fight for social justice. ☺☺☺



Alison Eichler is president of Sophia Academy's Board of Directors. She returned to Providence in 2005, the city of her youth, to provide a better quality of life for her family, and now works to improve the quality of life for Providence residents. In addition to her position on Sophia's board, Eichler is vice-chair of the Board of the Providence After School Alliance, secretary of the Board of FirstWorks, and a member of the Rhode Island Personnel Appeal Board. Since 1985, Eichler has been co-principal in Eichler Realty Company, which invests in and manages commercial and residential properties. That role led her to purchase, renovate, and operate the Dutch Harbor Boat Yard in Jamestown from 2008 to 2014, when it was sold. Eichler is a graduate of The Wheeler School and New York University.

photo by Agapao Productions

Alison Eichler

My dream job, I thought, was to be a lawyer. This occupation seemed like the best way to help people without power.

Children learn by example, and examples of helping others were plentiful in my upbringing. My maternal grandparents, Russian and Romanian immigrants, came to America because they wanted to improve their lives. This inspired them to improve the lives of new immigrants through the International Institute of RI. My mother was the driving force in creating the citywide tutoring organization now known as Inspiring Minds. My father continuously worked on progressive political campaigns.

Given that legacy, I was driven to find ways to help others. My first volunteer job was in sixth grade, tutoring at MLK Elementary School. In middle school I read to the elderly at Hallworth House, and in high school I volunteered at the RI Rape Crisis Center. In college, I tutored teenagers in a halfway house who, after prison, needed help getting their GEDs.

Even after graduating, working in commer-

cial real estate, marrying, and having children, I continued to seek opportunities where help was needed. I was an active PTA leader throughout my children's school years. I was gratified to be able to make a difference. Happily, my husband Larry is also passionately devoted to community service.

In addition to running a real estate business with my husband, we have taken on many entrepreneurial challenges, including rescuing a failing boatyard in Jamestown. This became my adventure, and I was determined to succeed as a woman in what's traditionally a man's occupation, and to mentor women, including the woman who now runs it. The boatyard also served as a venue to help others, hosting events for the local education foundation and creating a community gathering place.

There are many young people who have not had the examples that I had to teach them that they, too, can make a difference. I have chosen to take on leadership roles in organizations that share this mission.

Sophia Academy takes girls from low-income homes in middle school, a vulnerable period in their lives, and empowers them through academic and social justice education.

The Providence After School Alliance provides quality after-school activities for thousands of middle and high school students, in a public/private partnership that is a national model.

FirstWorks directly engages public school students with world-class artists, provides experiential learning in a classroom setting and often offers first experiences of live performance in the theatre.

I am so proud that our sons continue the legacy of helping others. Our youngest, Daniel, believes so strongly in an obligation to serve that he is an Air Force pilot, now in Afghanistan. David was a volunteer firefighter and tutor before he became a venture capitalist, now mentoring others in his field.

As for being a lawyer, I never became one. My vocation is better described by a synonym. I am, and always will be, an advocate. ☺☺☺



Woman of Achievement



Henrietta Tonia White-Holder is a humanitarian, social entrepreneur, community builder, and passionate advocate for the disadvantaged and underserved. In 2008, using an unexpected "gift" of \$1,000, became the visionary founder and CEO of Higher Ground International, a non-profit NGO bringing clean water and sanitation to her native Liberia and mending broken lives resulting from the prolonged civil war in the country. She has been actively involved in her local community, lobbying to end the 14-year civil war in Liberia and was on the forefront of community integration and empowerment for newly arrived war affected young Liberians in Rhode Island. In 2015, Higher Ground International saw further progress, with the opening of its new RUKIYA (African word, meaning: Rising Up | Progress) CENTER on the South Side of Providence. The Rukiya Center focuses on intergenerational programs, women and youth empowerment, the Sweetie Care Program for African immigrant and refugee elders as well as workforce and literacy programs. White-Holder has 24 years experience working in the non-profit sector in Rhode Island – 18 of which she served as a residential director supporting individuals with differing abilities. She is currently participating in the Executive Director Leadership Circle at the United Way of RI and is a 2011 graduate of Leadership Rhode Island. She has received numerous recognitions for her work with the most recent being The Providence Newspaper Guild – 2017 The John F. Kiffney, Public Service Award.

photo by Agapao Productions

Henrietta Tonia White-Holder

Bearing Witness

Growing up in Liberia, West Africa, my true desire had been to be a doctor. At the time, I felt that it was the best way that I could help the people in my community. My upbringing, my experience as an immigrant in the U.S., and Higher Ground International has shaped me into who I am today. While I am not a physician, I espouse the same beliefs about helping those in need that I held firmly to as a child in Liberia.

I had a privileged and idyllic childhood. But in the midst of that comfort, however, I was surrounded by abject poverty, oppression, inequality, social injustice, violence and abuse of women and girls. I was particularly stricken by the wanton violence and neglect of half the community. Women, often beaten and abused, were also saddled with children whom they had to care for by themselves. But, there was also another unspoken abuse; the molestation of little girls and even as a young girl, I felt that I needed to take action to right some of the wrongs that I had witnessed. I would often use the money that was supposed to pay my school fees to help the native women, even if in small ways. I did not realize, then, that I was preparing for a vocation outside of medicine – one that would help ease the suffering of the forgotten, neglected, and abused – a life's work devoted to healing different kinds of wounds.

I attribute my strength and perseverance to my mother. "Moma," as I called her, was born into poverty, and lost her mother when she was only one month

old. She was left in the care of her father, a fisherman, and his sister in Mary Land, a remote rural county in Liberia. Moma was only able to obtain a third grade education and her marriage to my father became a source of contention for his family. His mother and sister – my aunt and grandmother, were well educated, cultured, and affluent. In their eyes, Moma was not good enough. The indigenous or native people whom they (including my beloved Papa) openly called "country people" were not good enough because they were not one of my father's class.

Nevertheless, Moma was a renaissance woman. She had the innate ability to create pathways of opportunity for many people who experienced similar hardships that Moma knew all too well. She took in strangers and extended family members who needed a chance and countless indigenous/native children who became "brothers and sisters" to my biological siblings and me. Moma made sure that they were educated and received equal treatment to her own children. There was always food in our home for anyone who came by and was hungry. Whenever I showed my displeasure with her taking in so many disadvantaged children (mostly because of Papa and his family disapproval), Moma would be quick to remind me, "I am preparing you for tomorrow." I did not realize that I was being prepared for an important journey. Moma is in her nineties now. She lives in Liberia and when the load seems heavy, she encourages me to continue to push forward because she knows that if she could do it, I can do it too.

My immigration to the U.S. heightened my own

awareness of blatant discrimination, hate, inequalities' and social injustices. HGI's RUKIYA CENTER, which I founded and have been operating since 2015, is located in the heart of South Providence. In the two years since we have been in this location, it is impossible to bear witness to human suffering, and the social and economic disparities that exist within the community, and turn a blind eye. Like Moma, whoever comes by the RUKIYA CENTER who is hungry, I offer them something to eat. It is a safe, welcoming and loving space.

I can honestly say that I have been in training for my work with Higher Ground International throughout my entire life. God has blessed me with an amazing family, HGI's team and so many people who love me and believe in this vision to help restore dignity, uplift and improve the quality of life for those who are marginalized, unseen and forgotten in communities here in Rhode Island and the rural villages in West Africa, Liberia.

I am both honored and humbled by this recognition and I receive it in the name of my Moma, Harriette Minor White; and all of the Black and Brown women and girls who have been told, "No" so often that they've doubted themselves, and believed that they're incapable. I want all of those women and girls to take a good look at me, and believe that when you are willing to work hard and stand firm in your beliefs, you will Rise. To them I say "You are Enough. You are able. Just believe, and go do what moves you."



Anne Grant arrived in Rhode Island in 1988 when she was 41 to work with battered and homeless women and their children as executive director of the Women's Center of Rhode Island. She began focusing on women's issues in her twenties when she edited New York City NOW's "Report on Sex Bias in the Public Schools" that helped win passage of Title IX. Her productions on women's history and coeducational sports brought her two Emmy Awards. She has served as a United Methodist Pastor at Trinity and Canaan Churches. Grant's public service is extensive and includes coordinator for Parenting Project, vice chair CommunityWorksRI, president Elmwood Foundation, and executive director of Women's Center RI.

Editor's Note:
Anne Grant is shown with a portrait of her grandmother, Maud Case Denton.

photo by Agapao Productions

Anne Grant

An Evolving Mission

Growing up as a fundamentalist Christian in New York's Catskill Mountains, I longed to be a missionary. In school, I did not want to spend time cooking and sewing, since Jesus said "take no thought for" those things. Could I learn metal and woodworking instead? The shop teacher refused: "It's too dangerous for girls."

Phil West, a family friend, was studying for the ministry. I fell in love with the way he made sense of the world. We married in 1965.

When I got depressed, we blamed birth control pills. Our first baby was a boy. Phil got a vasectomy. We adopted our next transracially. Friends asked why I requested a boy.

Their question haunted me. Women seemed frivolous, self-absorbed, ineffectual. Phil urged me to join the women's movement. He pointed out how my anger and self-loathing resembled some black teenagers we knew. Similarities between racism and sexism prompted me to attend a New York City NOW demonstration in 1970. That very day, NOW leaders

asked me to write a letter to the mayor protesting sex discrimination in public schools.

I felt giddy with excitement. Before long, Congresswoman Bella Abzug read our letter and report into The Congressional Record to help win Title IX and outlaw sex bias in schools.

Stories from women's history inspired me. I produced a multi-media documentary for NOW called, "Our North American Foremothers." Later adapted for television, it won three Emmy Awards.

Feminism stirred me at new depths. Women called each other sisters – like in my childhood church. I returned to modest clothes and shunned makeup. Instead of praying away confused feelings in tongues, I struggled to talk about them in English. We purged sexist words from our language. We distributed feminist articles as if they were religious tracts.

Encouraged by United Methodist activists, I went to seminary, got ordained, and served a church in rural Connecticut, where our family had moved. Phil and I demonstrated against apartheid in South Africa and helped deliver medicines to refugees in Mozambique and Namibia.

Meanwhile, pastoral counseling made me increasingly aware of families tormented by domestic violence and sexual abuse. In 1988, I became executive director of the Women's Center of Rhode Island, and we moved to Providence. Battered women showed me how Family Court and the Department of Children, Youth and Families made life intolerable for their children. I wrote newspaper columns and blogs about lawyers and agencies that abused their power. It became my mission.

Phil and I faced one more dynamic shift in 2009. We had both retired from active ministry when we discovered our beliefs had shifted. We had become secular.

My personal arc resembles the evolution of the YWCA and YMCA. Both started as Christian faith communities in the mid-19th Century. In response to human needs, they grew increasingly secular. Today YMCA banners lift up core values of CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, and RESPONSIBILITY. The YWCA motto affirms, “Eliminating racism, empowering women.” These remain central to my own mission. My Facebook page is “FaithfullySecular.”



Woman of Achievement



Vanessa Volz has served as the executive director of Sojourner House since 2011. During her tenure, the agency has expanded its mission, developed new residential programming, and grown its budget. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Rhode Island College, where she teaches in the Gender Studies program. She previously practiced law at the Rhode Island Disability Law Center and has published articles in the Rutgers University Women's Rights Journal and the UC Berkeley legal casebook, *Reproductive Rights and Justice*. She serves as a board member of the RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the RI Coalition for the Homeless, and she is a current class member of Leadership RI.

photo by Agapao Productions

Vanessa Volz

I grew up as the oldest of five children in a household where books seemed as numerous as toys. I was a voracious reader from a young age and I loved story-telling; as soon as I could string my own sentences together, I convinced my mother to let me use her old manual typewriter, and I would spend hours concocting my own stories – mostly fiction, although I did create a “family newsletter” that had a limited circulation. Consequently, one of my first professional aspirations was to become a writer or journalist. I wrote for the school newspaper and eventually became the editor-in-chief of my high school publication, securing a scholarship that allowed me to leave my hometown in southern Indiana to attend a college in New York, where I studied English and Gender Studies.

It was there, under the tutelage of a literature professor who became a mentor to me, that I realized how the power of words could be used to impact social change. In my multiethnic and women’s studies courses, I became acutely

aware of the myriad of narratives that had never been widely shared; of histories and personal stories that had been buried and abandoned as forgotten. I also became cognizant of the fact that almost every story had multiple sides, but other perspectives to a story aren’t always brought forward or disseminated. By the time I graduated from college, I knew that I wanted to become a lawyer and work in the public interest. I wanted every person I represented to have their story told with a loud, profound voice.

I eventually attended law school, and then I practiced law for nearly five years for a non-profit, where my work focused around advocating for individuals and groups whose concerns were often marginalized or ignored. I then assumed the position as the executive director of Sojourner House, a domestic and sexual violence agency. In my current job, I continue to see the tangible impact of giving a voice to someone who has been silenced; of validating someone’s experience and giving them the space to share their own story.

The individuals and families we serve at Sojourner House come to us for help, often in one of the darkest times of their journey. Quite simply, we often are able to help change the course of the lives of the people we serve. Because of the interventions and resources that we can offer them, they frequently experience an alternative outcome. In this way, we give them the opportunity to revise their personal narrative. They are the authors, and we are able to provide them with some of the tools to craft their story.

The author Maya Angelou is credited with saying, “There is no greater burden than carrying an untold story.” The work that we do at Sojourner House with victims and survivors allows them not only to tell their story and have it validated, but we’re often able to help them start a new chapter in their own life. As rewarding as it has been for me to pen my own stories, I have learned that there is an even greater satisfaction in helping someone else write their own.





Deloris Davis Grant is an English teacher at Central Falls High School (CFHS) who is dedicated to academic excellence in all forms of communication in the high school classroom. She is an alumna of CFHS and Rhode Island College with a BA in English and Master of Arts in Teaching English. Grant has been awarded an Honorary Doctor of Education and experienced AP English and Drama teacher at CFHS. Grant is the troupe leader of the CFHS International Thespian Society and a member of the English Speaking Union, which sponsors the National Shakespeare Oration Competition. Grant's training in speaking and listening, as well as in language arts has spanned 30 years of experience. She is also a part of the RIC/CF innovation lab. Grant currently serves as a clinical teacher and supervises student teachers from several of the local colleges and universities. She has traveled to more than 70 countries and enjoys learning about cultures and peoples from around the world and has also donated time and effort to help the children of Cambodia and Myanmar. Grant has worked with underserved children and their families for more than 35 years.”

photo by Agapao Productions

Deloris Davis Grant

At the age of 8, I dreamed of becoming an archaeologist. My days were consumed with digging holes in Jenks Park in Central Falls and looking for buried treasure. I knew that someday I could possibly work beside some of the great scientists and make a discovery of an ancient city. Dr. Leakey was my hero. I absorbed myself in history textbooks, encyclopedias, PBS programs, news articles, basically anything that was historical and foreign interested me and sparked my imagination. I was also a writer and used these ideas to create stories. My imagination was infinite.

Fast forward to when I was in the 10th grade, I hit the jackpot. I got a small part time job working in the archaeology department at Brown University. My job consisted of cleaning artifacts with a toothbrush. I cleaned bones, earthenware, and whatever I was given. I worked alone for hours every day, wondering where these artifacts were coming from. I made up stories in my head. The possibilities were infinite. That was one

of the best jobs I ever had. I looked forward to cleaning the new shipments that came in weekly and I knew this was going to be my future.

Alas, by the time I got to college, I knew at the end of my first year that my passion for archaeology was not as strong as my passion for creating stories and using my voice to articulate ideas. I discovered that teaching English was my true calling. However, in my heart I have always admired the many archaeologist who get to be an integral part of a discovery.

Today, I have used my passion and desire for archaeology to travel the world and explore UNESCO sites and ancient ruins. I have also earned a certificate in colored gemstones from the Gemological Institute of America. I have traveled to more than 80 countries exploring the histories of people and collecting gemstones, art, artifacts and stories from people. I have been to the ruins of ancient Troy, the fields of Pagodas in

Pagan, ancient Albanian amphitheaters, I have crawled in the Vietnamese Cu Chi tunnels, climbed the great wall of China, discover the Machu Picchu ruins in Peru, taken a gem class in Sri Lanka, visited mines in Ratnapura and visited Turkey's ancient caves and Armenian monasteries that hold the history of Moses people. The mountains of Delphi in Greece were magnificent and the stories of the Greek myths played out in my imagination. The great pharaohs of Egypt, the deserts of Africa and the middle east have fanned my imagination for over 30 years. Oh, the places I have been.

I use my travel stories in my teachings and I share valuable lessons about life to my students. I have kept my dream alive through teaching. Each year I travel and collect memories and histories to help my students imagine what their future might be. I help my students to dream. I am blessed to be a teacher.



Elin Torell

Elin Torell joined the Coastal Resources Center in 2002. As director of International Programs, she leads CRC teams in implementing long-term field programs around the world. She provides programmatic direction and selected technical support within her main areas of expertise: monitoring, evaluation and learning, livelihood development, gender mainstreaming, population and environment, civil society, fisheries management and environmental compliance. Torell has more than 15 years of experience providing technical assistance and leading complex and interdisciplinary projects in East Africa and South East Asia. She is an expert in project management and developing and leading strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation systems that foster learning within projects as well as across multiple projects. Torell has a PhD in environmental studies, an MsC in human and economic geography and a bachelor's degree in social science.

photo by Agapao Productions

One of my earliest memories of a dream job was leafing through my uncle's National Geographic magazines and thinking that I would love to be one of the staff writers of that magazine – getting to travel the world to experience and capture different cultures and environments. From an early age, I had three interests, which helped shape who I am today: enjoying the outdoors, travelling and experiencing different cultures; and working to improve the lives of those who have less.

One of the most important parts of my tweens and teens was being a YWCA-YMCA scout. In Sweden, the two organizations are combined into one, which I think makes a lot of sense, because I believe that gender should not be a barrier in life. The YWCA-YMCA experience was very important to me, because it defined many of the values that guide me today – of inclusiveness and respect for people and our planet. Through the scouts, I also spent a lot of time outdoors throughout the four seasons, figuring out how to manage with few frills and resources – something that has been helpful while traveling and working in Africa and South East Asia.

I come from a family of sea captains and traveling and living abroad has always been part of my family culture. I had the privilege of traveling abroad from an early age, visiting my uncle in South East Asia and going shorter adventures around Europe. My family always embraced opportunities and growing up I was encouraged to follow my dreams. I was not told to go for the most secure or practical career, but to do something that I really like.

When I went to the university, I decided to focus on economic geography, international development, and environmental studies. Over the last twenty years I have been fortunate to work around the world, assisting coastal communities in managing their coastal and marine resources. In all of my work, I am putting people – and especially women – first, realizing that a sustainable future lies in balancing environmental conservation with equitable social and economic development. I did not end up being a National Geographic writer – but in a way, I am building the stories that they cover. 



Marta V. Martínez

I grew up in El Paso, Texas with my parents, four sisters and brother. My baby sister was born while I was a senior year in high school. It was around that time that I began to feel restless – a strong desire to explore the world. And that's how I ended up in Rhode Island.

My dream was to become a television Journalist. I knew as a teenager that the first step I had to take to fulfill that dream was one toward a higher education. I ended up at Providence College, and since PC did not have a Broadcast-Journalism major, I chose to be an English major. That exposed me to many talented writers on the PC campus who might have been my mentors had they been able to understand what it was like to be a Latina, a person of Latino heritage.

That experience left me aware how important it is to have a Latino or Latina mentor to help get you through the day or offer a friendly shoulder to lean on. But it also showed me how to be persistent and my own advocate if I wanted to fulfill my dreams.

An internship during my junior year in college gave me an opportunity to work in television, and it was then that I realized Broadcast Journalism was not the profession I wanted after all. From that I learned

that working behind the scenes is more powerful. It taught me to take control and life is not a script to be handed to you by someone else.

Back to that restlessness I felt that led me to where I am today. I remember someone once saying to me that Education is the key..." and as I think back, I realize that education became my key to calming the restlessness I felt as a teenager.

It was my desire for an education that provided me a level of control, and it put me on the road to freedom – freedom to choose, freedom to be. It was my desire for an education that gave me the opportunity to travel from the largest state in the U.S. to the smallest state in the Union. And it was after receiving my degree that sparked me to climb towards higher ground.

Today I find any opportunity to mentor a young Latina or Latino, to support and encourage them reach their dreams. I believe in empowerment, that allowing someone to find him or herself is the greatest achievement one can fulfill. Life is not a script. Life is what you make it to be, but only after you've taken the steps toward to make your dreams a reality.

Marta V. Martínez founded the Hispanic Heritage Committee of RI (HHCRI) in 1988 is now the executive director of Rhode Island Latino Arts. She is the founder and project director of the Latino Oral History Project of Rhode Island and is a member of the National Oral History Association, the National Storytellers Network, the American Folklife Society and on the Executive Committee of Latinos in Heritage Conservation @the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In August 2014, Martínez published a book entitled *Latino History of RI: Nuestras Raíces*, based on her work with the Latino oral history project. She promotes the importance of collecting history as a way to enhance self pride and a sense of place by offering workshops to young people on the art of collecting oral histories, pairing them with elders and individuals who have a story to tell. Martínez recently opened and manages La Galería del Pueblo | The Village Gallery, a Latino arts gallery and cultural hub. Martínez is a graduate of Providence College. She has a minor in Broadcast Journalism, a Masters degree in print Journalism from George Washington University and certificate of translation/interpretation from Georgetown University and also from Gallaudet University. She is adjunct professor at Providence College and a Humanities Fellow at Brown University; has taught at Central Falls High School and St. Peter's Elementary School, Warwick.

photo by Agapao Productions



Julie Nora

Julie Nora has worked as a bilingual educator in several K-16 educational settings for the past 25 years. She received her BA in U.S. Intellectual History (U.C. Berkeley), her Masters in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (San Francisco State University), and her PhD in Education with a Specialization in Language, Literacy and Culture (University of Rhode Island/Rhode Island College). She worked with international students at an English institute at Bryant University, as a middle school English as a Second Language teacher in Providence Public Schools, as an applied researcher at the Education Alliance at Brown University, and has been the director of the International Charter School in Pawtucket since 2003. She has authored many articles and books. Seen as a resource to the state in the area of education generally and bilingual education specifically, she is regularly asked to serve on state education working groups.

photo by Agapao Productions

As a kid, I panicked when asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I had no idea.

In high school I veered towards the humanities, in hind site due largely to my encounters with Ms. Thompson, a social studies teacher who introduced me to critical pedagogy, a tool that then and to this day has helped me to understand power, inequality and injustice and to confront oppressive circumstances. I was also always curious about the world and my place in it. What I wanted to learn about had begun to reveal itself, but the career it would lead to had not.

I used the lens of “those with strong history departments” to choose my colleges. Like many underclassmen, I took courses in many disciplines trying to decide on my major. Ultimately I returned to what brought me to U.C. Berkeley and majored in intellectual history—the historiography of ideas and thinkers. I was able to appease

my curiosity about the world, but still had no idea what my dream job was.

After graduating, I spent several years between working in Bay Area restaurants and traveling for months at a time. I (mostly) thoroughly enjoyed working in restaurants—the friendships, being part of a foodie culture in the Bay Area, the freedom it gave me to pack up and leave for months at a time were all gratifying. Traveling—visiting old friends and making new ones, immersing myself in other cultures and languages—fed my curiosity about the world and myself. While I enjoyed this period of my life, I did not imagine I would live this lifestyle indefinitely. However, in my mid twenties, I still did not know what I wanted to be when I grew up.

I met, fell in love with, and married a native Spanish speaker who had come to California from his native Venezuela at the time I was finishing my undergraduate studies. Our travels led us to Spanish speaking

countries where I began to learn Spanish and met his family and friends. I returned to college to pursue a Masters in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Initially I thought I would continue to travel the world teaching English. I didn't. I began working as an educator in the States. For the past 25 years, I have had diverse opportunities as an educator—working in public and private settings and at K-12 and university levels. I research and write. I received my Ph.D. in education.

I realize now that being an educator has always been my dream job. Education was transformative for me personally as a young person. I relish in being able to pay it forward when possible. I was always curious. My career has allowed me to constantly learn and grow. While I did not think I knew what my dream job was as a child, learning has always propelled me in life, and, yes, it continues to manifest itself in my daily life. . . .



Pilar McCloud is the CEO and founder of A Sweet Creation youth organization, which was founded in the Olneyville section of Providence. McCloud is currently the chairwoman of The NAACP Providence Branch Youth High School and College Chapters as well as an officer and Executive Board member. McCloud serves as the New England Area Conference Advisor for the YouthWorks Committee serving the 15 chapters of the NAACP in the New England area that have active youth councils. She is also co-director of Unified Solutions an incubator organization for grassroots nonprofit organizations in Providence. After working with youth in various communities for over a decade McCloud completed her 3rd term as an AmeriCorps member at Youth Build Preparatory Academy as the mentor team leader. She mentors youth with Big Brothers Big Sisters of The Ocean State, GoodWill Industries, The Met High School and Nathaniel Greene Middle School. She is a member of The National Mentor Partnership. McCloud has received several awards and accolades including The Youth Build 2015 Humanitarian Award, The National Secretaries of State Medallion Award in 2015 for Civic Leadership & Advocacy, along with being the 2015 NAACP Rosa Parks Award winner.

photo by Agapao Productions

Pilar McCloud

My Dream Job

As a child living in the Washington Heights section of New York City with my parents, I often acted and played out scenes in my bedroom with my toys. I wasn't really sure what I wanted to be when I grew up, but I knew I wanted to hit the big stage.

So of course as I advanced in school, I advanced in the arts. Later, I thought business management would be my passion and that is what I would pursue in college. But lo and behold when I stepped onto the grounds of Long Island University in Brookville, I realize something—I was a black young woman.

Up until that point in my life, race never played a role. Or did it? I often found myself having to describe or explain

to others—who are not of color—my situation, my story and my feelings.

I guess it didn't take you too long to figure out that once I had children of my own, I became a strong advocate for youth, young women and people of color. Partially because I had to advocate for myself my son and my daughter. Being a single mother and a woman of color came with a certain stigmatism. So I decided to prove them all wrong.

They said I couldn't complete school?
I did.

They said I would have no life, because I had children and no husband. I had more than enough for three people. I took my children every step of the way. We became each others advocates. They advocated for me and I definitely advocated for them.

So for me to step into the role of advisor with the NAACP youth works committee—as well as starting my own nonprofit youth organization—seems like a natural progression.

Advocating have been a part of my life from the very moment I was born, I just didn't know it yet. Once I found my calling and put on my ruby red slippers, I never looked back.

As long as I have a voice and movement, I will stand tall and proud and speak up for women, people with disabilities, youth and those that are marginalized by stereotypes that are not true—not only in my city, but any city that I can get to.

You see that's what community service is to me—not just serving the community where I live, but any community that is in need. What is your calling? •••

“NEARI Children’s Fund Gingerbread Express support means so much, not only to the YWCA, but to the kids and community we serve. Every year they go above and beyond anything we ever could expect. Thanks to their contributions, hundreds of children experience the holidays as a special time of year.” - *Deborah Perry, President/CEO of YWCA Rhode Island*

NEARI Children’s Fund Gingerbread Express



“NEARI Children’s Fund Gingerbread Express established a relationship with YWCA about 20 years ago; at the time it was Nickerson Community Center. Staff saw news coverage of the Gingerbread’s delivery at the D’Abate school in Providence. They called and pleaded a great case for the families serviced by YWCA. It was clear there was a need, but I was concerned that I would not be able to find enough sponsors for these additional families. The program began to expand and the number of sponsors for children increased. We were able to accommodate the YWCA families that year and have been assisting families at YWCA Rhode Island ever since.”

- Valerie Staples, Children’s Fund Coordinator

NEARI Children’s Fund Gingerbread Express is a program that links members and friends with public school students who are facing a bleak holiday season. The program has embraced thousands of children in need over the years. In many instances, the gifts from the Gingerbread Express are the only gifts the child received. A gift tag cutout in the shape of a gingerbread cookie is made for each of the student recipients listing clothing and shoe sizes along with the child’s wish list. The cutouts are then distributed to NEARI members and friends who are willing to be anonymous donors and fulfill the child’s needs. To preserve the dignity of the students, the identity of the giver and the recipient is withheld.

photo courtesy of NEARI Children’s Fund Gingerbread Express

150
Sesquicentennial
1867 - 2017

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

Rhode Island

YWCA Rhode Island celebrates milestone anniversary

Dear Friends:

YWCA Rhode Island is observing our 150th anniversary this year. As we celebrate our past, we are focused on building the future.

The YWCA in Rhode Island was founded in 1867 in Providence by seven women concerned about providing a home away from home for young women who had migrated to the city in search of work. That makes it the third oldest YW in the country, and as early as 1879, the organization's programs included an employment bureau.

Supporting and economically empowering girls and women remains a focus, but the ways those goals are accomplished has evolved. While a boarding house, at 54 North Main St., Providence, and then a summer residence as a vacation retreat were the manifestations a century and a half ago, today's programs look much different.

Now there is Rosie's Girls, which introduces girls to non-traditional trades, like construction, which can lead to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers, and programs such as the Fantastic Girltastic Code Company, "designed to make computer sciences relevant, cool, hip and exciting". Before YWCA Rhode Island, there was the YWCA of Woonsocket (established 1921, later renamed YWCA Northern Rhode Island), YWCA of Providence (1890), and YWCA Pawtucket/Central Falls. The latter two merged in the 1965 to form YWCA Greater Rhode Island, and in 2011 YWCA Northern Rhode Island was added to create the statewide organization.

Individually and together, these organizations have done ground-breaking work. In 1980, YWCA of Northern Rhode Island started Parenting in Progress, offering teen mothers academic courses leading to a GED along with parenting instruction and support services. It was a paradigm for the Sheila "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, a charter school established in 2012 and named for a former executive director, that serves 360 at-risk students at two locations.

Other YWCA programs have spun off into separate agencies, including the International Institute, Travelers' Aid (now Crossroads, RI) and the Plantations Club. YWCA Greater Rhode Island helped establish the Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center, now called Day One; served as the first home for Progreso Latino, and as the home of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Its support group for LGBTQQ youth turned into Youth Pride Inc.

Because child care is crucial to working families, the YWCA has for years operated before- and after-school programs, summer camps and a state-licensed preschool. Woonsocket's preschool has been in operation since 1932.

The YWCA's physical presence has grown with the mergers and recent acquisitions. Three years ago we purchased assets of the former Nickerson House in Olneyville, which included a community center and 50 units of transitional housing for veterans as well as a 60-acre property in Coventry. The community center is "full to capacity," with after-school programs, an artists' collaborative, one of the Nowell Academy branches, and leased space for Dr. Day Care.

When we think about our history and measure it against our current programs and strategic plan, it is clear to us that we have not strayed from the original mission of our foremothers. It's a mission that is as relevant today as it was 150 years ago. A mission that empowers women and girls through programs, services and advocacy, and one that helps individuals explore and experience the world in a way they may not have otherwise imagined possible.

Very truly yours,

Marissa Ruff, Chair the Board of Directors
Deborah Perry, President/CEO

Short Look at YWCA Rhode Island's Long History

1867 - 2017

Providence Women's Christian Association was formed.

1867

Cottages were opened in Conimicut Park as a summer resort for working women.

1879

Providence Women's Christian Association merged with the Providence Evangelist Young Women's Christian Association, which added an employment bureau, and junior and industrial departments.

1888

With a greater emphasis on younger women, the organization's name was formally changed to the Young Women's Christian Association.

1889

YWCA Founded Traveler's Aid, later to become Crossroads, RI.

1894

YWCA of Providence founded the International Institute of Rhode Island, later to merge with Dorcas Place.

1921

YWCA of Woonsocket was formed and becomes the 1st YWCA in the country to allow membership to all women regardless of religious affiliation.

1923

YWCA of Woonsocket opens a preschool.

1932

Providence and Pawtucket/Central Falls YWCA's merged, forming the YWCA of Greater Rhode Island. Programming focus moves from recreational to social services and political activity.

1965

YWCA Greater Rhode Island founded the RI Rape Crisis Center, later to become Day One. Program scope expanded to include eliminating racism, crime intervention, rape counseling and child abuse services.

1973

YWCA Greater Rhode Island and Women's Center founded the Blackstone Shelter for Battered Women.

1980

YWCA Northern Rhode Island creates Parenting in Progress, a GED program with wrap around services for teen mothers.

1984

YWCA Greater Rhode Island founded "The Way Out" a weekly support group for LGBTQQ youth, which later became Youth Pride Inc.

1993

YWCA began offering ENCOREplus®, a breast and cervical education and support program for low-income women.

1996

YWCA Northern Rhode Island leads the way bringing The Silent Witness Project Rhode Island a national initiative that honors and remembers victims of domestic murder.

1997

YWCA Greater Rhode Island initiated HIV outreach and education for at risk women.

2001

The Sarah Francis Grant Homestead was opened, providing housing for homeless women with disabilities.

2004

YWCA Northern Rhode Island creates She Shines™ Magazine, a statewide multimedia publication celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women.

2005

YWCA Northern Rhode Island hosts 1st Women of Achievement Awards.

2005

YWCA Northern Rhode Island hosts 1st Women Holding Office Celebration.

2009

YWCA Northern Rhode Island takes leadership role in creating The Rhode Island Alliance (RIA), a statewide collaborative effort dedicated to reducing teen pregnancy and empowering pregnant and parenting teens.

2010

YWCA Northern Rhode Island and partner organizations, host 1st Race Against Racism.

2011

YWCA Greater Rhode Island and YWCA Northern Rhode Island merge to form a single statewide organization - YWCA Rhode Island.

2012

YWCA begins oversight of The Gini Fund, a scholarship fund for female student/athletes in memory of East Providence High School teacher and coach Gini Duarte.

2012

YWCA Rhode Island sponsored Sheila "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy, a public charter high school, is granted preliminary approval by the Rhode Island Department of Education to serve 360 at-risk youth.

2012

YWCA offers Rosie's Girls non-traditional trade skills programming.

2013

YWCA offers Fantastic Girtastic Code Company coding skills programming.

2013

YWCA purchases assets of Nickerson Community Center in Providence.

2014

YWCA provides transitional housing program serving over 100 veterans annually.

2015

YWCA intensified its racial justice efforts training educators, community workers, and others on historical context of race in our country and effective ways to build resiliency in girls of color.

2017

YWCA purchases assets of Apeiron Institute for Sustainable Living.

2017

YWCA celebrates its 150th anniversary with Senator Donna Nesselbush (District 15, Pawtucket, North Providence) and Providence City Council President Sabina Matos serving as honorary co-chairs.

2017

**YWCA IS ON
A MISSION**

YWCA Rhode Island
Statement of Financial Position
December 31, 2016

Assets

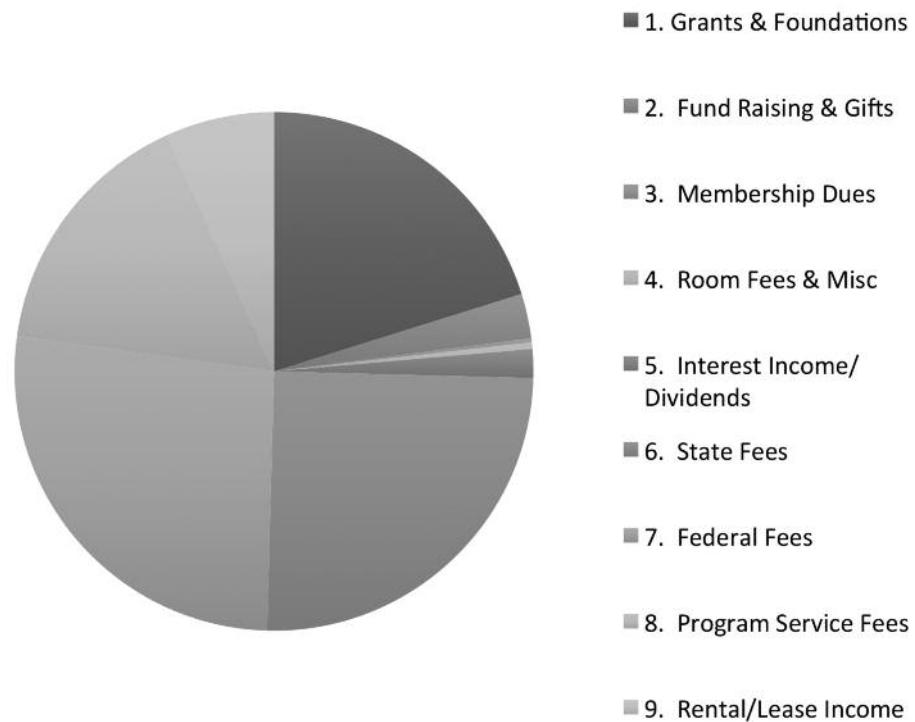
Current Assets	
Cash and cash	\$812,000
Accounts Receivable	184,743
Prepaid Expenses	47,114
Investments	358,364
Other assets	57,249
Total Current Assets	<u>1,459,470</u>
Other Assets	
Beneficial interest in assets held by others	802,943
Net property and equipment	3,761,267
Total Other Assets	<u>4,564,210</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$6,023,680</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$92,680
Accrued payroll	28,895
Deferred revenue	6,250
Current portion of long-term debt	75,551
Total Current Liabilities	<u>203,376</u>
Long-Term Debt	<u>1,892,587</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>2,095,963</u>
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	3,596,091
Temporarily restricted	306,626
Permanently restricted	25,000
Total Net Assets	<u>3,927,717</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$6,023,680</u>

**YWCA Rhode Island
2017 Agency Budget**

INCOME	2017 Agency Budget
1. Grants & Foundations	584,890.00
2. Fund Raising & Gifts	80,675.00
3. Membership Dues	7,200.00
4. Room Fees & Misc	11,800.00
5. Interest Income/Dividends	52,000.00
6. State Fees	724,932.00
7. Federal Fees	775,000.00
8. Program Service Fees	465,497.00
9. Rental/Lease Income	196,604.00
TOTAL INCOME	2,898,598.00



Join Us As We Stand Against Racism in 2017 and Beyond

Girls of color are often overlooked when policymakers address issues of gender and racial inequality and its relationship to domestic and dating violence.

Black girls face disproportionate challenges in schools and in the justice system, even though so much of the conversation about criminalization and the school-to-prison pipeline centers on boys of color. Latina and Native girls do not trail far behind them. Girls of color who experience trauma are more likely to be met with excessive discipline for acting out behaviors and less likely to get the trauma-informed care they need.

Here are some key statistics that give shape to the problem:

- Black girls are suspended at higher rates (12%) than girls of any other race or ethnicity, and at higher rates than White boys (6%) and White girls (2%); American Indian/Alaska Native girls (7%) and Latinas (4%) are also suspended at rates that exceed those of White girls.
- Recent budget cuts have also resulted in fewer school psychologists, social workers, and counselors who might otherwise provide support to girls struggling with trauma or other unmet needs before their behavior leads to punishable offenses: only two states (VT and WY) have counselor-to-student ratios that meet the recommended caseload standard set by the American Counseling Association.
- A majority of girls who have contact with and are detained in the juvenile justice system pose little or no threat to public safety: 37 percent of detained girls were held for status offense and technical violations (as compared to 25 percent of boys), and 21 percent of girls were detained for simple assault and public order offenses where no weapons were involved (as compared to 12 percent of boys).

YWCA offers a clarion call to all of our better selves, to highlight girls of color's unique struggles and ask what we as individuals and as part of larger organizations can do to improve our society by raising awareness and focusing on altering norms, polices and community conditions that impact girls of color.

**YWCA IS ON
A MISSION**

Take the Pledge:

**YWCA IS ON A MISSION TO ELIMINATE RACISM, EMPOWER WOMEN,
STAND UP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, HELP FAMILIES, AND STRENGTHEN
COMMUNITIES. I AM TAKING A STAND AGAINST RACISM WITH
YWCA RHODE ISLAND AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE
ACROSS THE COUNTRY.**

STAND AGAINST RACISM PLEDGE

Mindful of the continuing affliction of institutional and structural racism as well as the daily realities of all forms of bias, prejudice and bigotry in my own life, my family, my circle of friends, my co-workers and the society in which I live, with conviction and hope,

I take this pledge, fully aware that the struggle to eliminate racism will not end with a mere pledge but calls for an ongoing transformation within myself and the institutions and structures of our society.

I pledge to look deeply and continuously in my heart and in my mind to identify all signs and vestiges of racism; to rebuke the use of racist language and behavior towards others; to root out such racism in my daily life and in my encounters with persons I know and with strangers I do not know; and to expand my consciousness to be more aware and sensitive to my use of overt and subtle expressions of racism and racial stereotypes;

I pledge to educate myself on racial justice issues and share what I learn in my own communities even if it means challenging my family, my partner, my children, my friends, my co-workers and those I encounter on a daily basis

I pledge, within my means, to actively work to support public policy solutions that prominently, openly and enthusiastically promote racial equity in all aspects of human affairs; and to actively support and devote my time to YWCA, as well as other organizations working to eradicate racism from our society. YWCA USA is on a mission to eliminate racism and empower women. I join YWCA in taking a stand against racism today and every day.

*This pledge has been adapted by YWCA USA from the Pledge to Eliminate Racism in My Life, YWCA Bergen County which is an adaptation of the Pledge to Heal Racism in My Life, Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, April 10, 2006.

**YWCA IS ON
A MISSION**

RACIAL JUSTICE PROGRAM



Call YWCA Rhode Island at 401-769-7450:
to book a Training Series
to book Workshop Activities
to order DVDs

Training Series:

Day One - Level 100 (\$1,000 up to 25 people)

With a focus on racial and ethnic identity in the United States, participants will become more aware of their own identity development, cultural lens, and attitudes towards race.

Day Two - Level 200 (\$1,000 up to 25 people)

An external examination of how racism is embedded in the historical legacy of the United States in our laws, economy, housing markets, and institutions, including our criminal justice and educational systems. By considering this historical legacy, participants will understand the impact that past policies still have on our society today.

Day Three - Level 300 (\$1,000 up to 25 people)

This workshop day offers the opportunity for internal exploration by examining subtle and overt behaviors stemming from bias that take many forms: personal, interpersonal, cultural, institutional, and systemic. Participants consider their own spheres of influence where they have privilege and they develop strategies to work towards equity.

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