

OCTOBER 2023

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turning points

IMPACT
REPORT

SPARKING LASTING
CHANGE

AN EVENING OF
CELEBRATION, INSPIRATION
AND HOPE



YWCA
TORONTO

NATIONAL ADVOCACY.
COMMUNITY ACTION.



United Way
Greater Toronto
FUNDED AGENCY

150th Anniversary



A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

Heather M. McGregor

As we close out our 150th anniversary year, I cannot help but feel incredibly proud of everything we have accomplished. This past year has given us an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and provided us with a clear vision of our path forward.

Alongside community partners, survivors and loved ones of those lost to femicide, we led an urgent call to action for the City of Toronto to declare intimate partner and gender-based violence an epidemic, and under our new Mayor's leadership, we saw this declaration become a reality. To me, Toronto City Council unanimously supporting Mayor Olivia Chow's motion to make the declaration, signals hope. However, we also know that living in the city is getting harder and harder for many women, girls and gender diverse people as affordable housing becomes scarcer and the cost of living continues to rise.

While the prospect of facing these growing challenges is daunting, YWCA Toronto has the necessary knowledge, capable staff and a committed

community of supporters to allow us to continue providing places of safety and healing to those in need. We remain dedicated to creating positive change in our communities and in the lives of women, girls and gender diverse people.

Reflecting on our 150th anniversary also fills me with great gratitude for you, our dedicated Turning Point Partners, Fresh Start Monthly donors and loyal supporters. You have been with us through incredibly difficult times in recent years, and I welcome the opportunity to celebrate such a joyous milestone as our 150th anniversary with you. When I consider that so many of you share our vision of an equitable world for women, girls and gender diverse people and are willing to put your beliefs into action, I am, once again, filled with hope.

Thank you for all that you do for YWCA Toronto and our participants. I look forward to seeing many of you at our Celebration of Philanthropy event in your honour later this month.

TURNING POINTS NEWSLETTER

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PHOTOS: YWCA Toronto at a rally in the 1980s.

SPARKING LASTING CHANGE

We continued the celebration of YWCA Toronto's 150th anniversary recently by posing a reflective question to a group of fiercely feminist leaders united in their work—our program directors. When asked “how has your department sparked change in the community?” their answers not only showcased hard won accomplishments over the years but also offered powerful evidence of what we can do when we have the support of a dedicated community of donors like you.

Nina Gorka, Director of Shelters & Clinical Services

In 2018, we opened a new emergency shelter for women and gender diverse people, addressing a gap in the Toronto shelter scene. This change added 72 much-needed beds to the shelter system.

Our community programs, Breakthrough and Choices for Living, have not only given non-traditional, arts-based therapeutic interventions to

participants often weary of traditional methods of healing, but Choices for Living's success gave us the opportunity to begin the proposal process for what is now our largest housing program, the Elm Centre complex.

Tsering Tsomo, Director of Employment & Training

Since 1873, YWCA Toronto has been responding to the changing needs of women in our community by designing specialized training and employment programs. We currently offer more than 16 programs to assist a diverse population of participants build stronger economic futures across the city. Our programs have helped countless women and gender diverse people access training in skilled trades, information technology and digital skills for the workplace, while also helping them to develop successful job search strategies, improve their English language skills and access employment and settlement support for newcomers.

Sami Pritchard, Interim Director of Advocacy & Communications
YWCA Toronto has long been an advocate for social change. In the 1960s and 1970s, we supported pro-choice and birth control movements. In 1978, we made our anti-apartheid stance on South Africa known, and we helped establish some of the first International Women's Day activities in Toronto. Since the '80s, we have called for universal child care and held the position that a national child care system is essential for a women's full economic and social participation. More recently, Toronto City Council passed a motion declaring Intimate Partner Violence and Gender-Based Violence an epidemic in Toronto. We are thrilled to share this significant

step toward ending gender-based violence with our fellow feminist advocates, organizations and survivors in Toronto.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the solid foundation of donor support you provide. Your belief in our work has allowed us to help women, girls and gender diverse people in their times of greatest need while also creating change on a broader, systemic level. Thank you for making this possible.


To hear from more of our directors on how YWCA Toronto has sparked change, please see our blog at <https://www.ywcatoronto.org/blog>.



DO YOU KNOW AN INSPIRING WOMAN?
WE WANT TO CELEBRATE HER

Nominate a woman who is making a difference in the lives of women, girls and gender diverse people.

Nomination deadline
Wednesday, November 1, 2023


For more information
Faith Feingold, Head of Major Gifts
ffeingold@ywcatoronto.org


YWCA TORONTO
WOMEN OF DISTINCTION


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Greater Toronto
HEADQUARTERS

150th Anniversary

MAKE YOUR VALUES YOUR LEGACY



YWCA Toronto's Monarch Society is a special group of supporters who, through a legacy gift today, will transform the lives of women, girls and gender diverse people tomorrow.


MONARCH SOCIETY

To learn more about planning your legacy gift, contact **Monika Sormova, Manager of Foundations & Planned Giving** at MSormova@ywcatoronto.org or 416.961.8101 x327.

FUTURE LEADERS

Our Girls', Youth and Family programs give young people the foundation they need to build vibrant, fulfilling lives and become tomorrow's community leaders.

Program Highlights:

Each summer, more than **500 girls and gender diverse youth** have the opportunity to challenge themselves, explore new skills, experience nature and make lasting friendships at YWCA Toronto's Camp Tapawingo.



Last year, **93 parents and children strengthened family bonds** in our Teen Mothers program, while mothers and gender diverse parents enhanced their parenting skills, self-confidence and knowledge of childhood development.



In 2022, we provided **30,549 healthy meals and snacks** through our Bergamot Early Learning Centre's affordable child care program, fuelling children for a day full of developmentally enriching activities and mitigating food insecurity.



In the last five years alone, YWCA Toronto's Girls' Centre has provided more than **850 educational workshops** to help girls and gender diverse youth improve their skills, build confidence and realize new possibilities.



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DONOR LOVE

In Loving Memory of Friends We Have Lost

Margaret Newall

“Margaret’s philanthropy and significant work toward ending violence against women and children, as well as her devotion to improving the lives of Indigenous women, have left a lasting impression on both YWCA Toronto and the larger social services sector in Canada. She was an integral part of our campaign to build the Elm Centre complex, and a 2022 Woman of Distinction. She remained deeply committed to our cause until her passing. Her kindness, determination and humility will always be remembered. I am profoundly honoured to have known Margaret and worked so closely with her.”

—FIROOZEH RADJAI, DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

Marguerite Jean (Jeanne) Rowles

“Jeanne’s commitment to the YWCA movement spanned more than 60 impressive years. Whether as a staff member at various YWCAs (Kingston, Toronto, Pakistan, Sudbury and Tanzania), volunteer or donor, she was devoted to social justice. Her contributions towards providing affordable housing for women ensured many were able to have a safe place to call home. We are also incredibly grateful for the generous legacy gift she chose to leave YWCA Toronto in her will. Her foresight and compassion will make a lasting difference for many in need.” —HEATHER MCGREGOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Barbara (Bonnie) Bean

“For more than three decades, Bonnie was a treasured member of YWCA Toronto’s community. She generously supported programs across the Association from Camp Tapawingo to the Girls’ Centre to our housing and shelter programs. When our participants faced tremendous difficulties during the pandemic, she provided significant support to help see them through. I will never forget her long-standing commitment to creating a better Toronto for women and girls in need.” —FAITH FEINGOLD, HEAD OF MAJOR GIFTS

Joan Eddy

“Joan’s over two decades of support for YWCA Toronto means so much to us. She was a wonderfully warm, kind and compassionate person, and we were always so happy to have her celebrate with us at our Women of Distinction galas and milestone moments, like 1st Stop Woodlawn’s 50th anniversary. She gave with an open heart and remained committed to helping those who accessed our programs. We miss her terribly and are so thankful for all of the care and generosity she gave to those who needed YWCA Toronto’s help.”

—HEATHER MCGREGOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



PHOTO: Our 2023 YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction Award Recipients. From left to right: Melissa Alexander, Daphne Taras, Manvir Bhangu, Dr. Umut Uzunel, Dr. Notisha Massaquoi, Agapi Gessesse and Charlie Wall-Andrews. Photographed by Michael Tenaglia, Michael T Photography

AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION, INSPIRATION AND HOPE

Our incredible community came together on Thursday, June 8th for the 42nd YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction Awards Gala. Together, 730 like-minded people, honoured seven extraordinary feminist leaders from diverse sectors, ranging from health to education to arts to community service.

We are grateful to our sponsors, supporters, silent auction donors and bidders, and volunteers for your generosity. Your commitment to the Toronto community helped raised over \$600,000, an impressive total that

will help transform the lives of our program participants.

When you help women, girls and gender diverse people flee violence, secure housing, find jobs, foster health and wellbeing, develop confidence, enhance skills and build economic prosperity, you create a stronger community for all.

We hope you will join us for another unforgettable evening on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at the 43rd YWCA Toronto Women of Distinction Awards Gala.

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